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Official Organ of Attakapas Historical Association  
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St. Martinville, Louisiana 70582  
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Harris J. Periou, President

Mrs. David R. Williams, Vice-Pres.

Albert Silverman, Recording Secretary

Mrs. Jerome Broussard, Treasurer

Mrs. Ernest Yongue, Corresponding Sec.

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### DUES

1968 dues should be paid before the Annual Election Meeting, as the BY-LAWS of the Attakapas Historical Association state "members whose dues are not paid before the Annual Election Meeting shall not be entitled to vote or to hold an office or chairmanship."

Attakapas Historical Association Dues Schedule:

- I. Life Membership for Individuals - \$100.00
- II. Annual dues for Individuals
  - (1) Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership - \$3.00
  - (2) Contributing membership - \$15.50
  - (3) Patron membership - \$20.50
- III. Annual Institutional Dues
  - (1) Regular - \$5.00
  - (2) Sustaining - \$10.00
- IV. Foreign dues will be set later

Members wishing to complete their files can buy the 1967 volume for \$3.00. The 1966 issue is available at \$ .50.

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### A.H.A. Special publication no. 2

Church records researched by Rt. Rev. Msgr. George A. Bodin, Pastor of St. John Cathedral (Lafayette, Louisiana) have been compiled into an alphabetical list of more than 17,000 individual names. Names of families long resident in the Attakapas area include early French, Canadian, Acadian, Spanish, German, and "American" settlers. The time period involved is especially from 1770 to 1850, but there are several hundred names from the Acadian records of St. Charles-aux-Mines (Grand-Pre) between 1707 and 1748.

Pre-publication price: \$10.00----After 4/30/68: \$15.00. Individuals are asked to pay in advance.

A limited number of copies of Special Publication No. 1, Marriage Contracts of Attakapas Post with the 1774 Census of Attakapas Post have been reprinted and are available at \$7.75, postpaid.

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From the President's Pen: Harris J. Periou

The annual membership meeting will be held on April 22, 1968. The main business of the meeting will be the election of members of the Board of Directors. The Directors are to be elected for overlapping years. With the Board's approval, I have selected a Nominating Committee representative of the Attakapas area to present a slate of nominees. This does not preclude nominations from the floor on the night of the election, provided the nominees are members of the Association and have expressed willingness to serve. The Officers of the Association will be elected by the Board when it meets for that purpose in May as directed by the Constitution and by-laws.

We are presently working towards obtaining a tax-free status for our Association. The preliminary work had been done, and it is hoped that the proper filing will be accomplished in the near future.

It was brought to our attention that there is a lack of volunteers. Most members would be surprised to discover the number of duties available. We are deeply grateful to those who have volunteered their invaluable services. We would, however, appreciate more volunteer workers.

The Association, although solvent at this time, is struggling financially to maintain its high level of production. The cost of material and the recent increase in postal rates have made inroads in our treasury. Statewide and nationally, associations of similar nature are also finding it difficult to operate. Our \$3.00 annual dues are an important part of the Association's financial support. I believe that it would be wise to consider raising the annual dues to secure the continuance of the Association and particularly the high caliber of the periodic publications which have attracted attention and inquiries from all corners of the nation as well as from Canada and France. The 1968 dues, however, will remain at \$3.00.

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Suggestions to Contributors

Papers are solicited in all the areas the Attakapas Association is interested in: traditions, landmarks, genealogy, and history. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced, and carefully documented. In general, the style of footnotes should conform to that recommended in Wood Gray, et al., Historian's Handbook (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964). Footnotes should contain full bibliographical information and will be incorporated within the body of the paper. Generally the Gazette prefers articles of four pages or less, but longer articles are frequently accepted.

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Announcement

"The Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society's Annual Institute will be held, for one day only, Saturday, April 20th, at Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana."

## THE GREVENBERG HOUSE

By

Carrie Poirson Wolford  
Jeanerette, Louisiana

This Greek revival two-story framehouse, typical of the Franklin area residences built in the 1850's, is fronted by four slender Corinthian columns supporting the pediment and has an upper balcony edged with a balustrade of delicate wooden spindles. A diamond-shaped window with green shutters is set in the center of the pediment. One particularly interesting feature is the treatment of one of the second floor doors, an artificial graining of the wood, which was a type of decor used at the period. Mr. Samuel Wilson, a New Orleans architect, expressed regret that he had not been able to use this door as a model when the National Trust was restoring the Shadows.

The land on which this charming old house is now located was first purchased by Jesse Smith in 1817 (Conveyance Book BA, folio 216, entry 436 of the Records of St. Mary Parish, hereafter cited as COB), acquired by John Smith and Robert Townsdale in 1829 (COB, B4, folio 427, entry 972).

In 1851, Mr. H. C. Wilson, a lawyer, bought from Daniel Dennett the lower half of a certain tract of land situated in the Parish of St. Mary at Irish Bend, with a frontage half the width of the tract. The original tract had been purchased by Daniel Dennett from David Robbins for the sum of \$2,000.00.

In 1857 Henry C. Wilson sold to Madame Frances E. Wickoff, widow of the late Gabriel Grevenberg, for the sum of \$7,500.00, the tract of land, the buildings, improvements, fences, water cisterns, etc. (COB, B19, folio 684, entry 12168).

Since this is the first mention of buildings or improvements, we can assume that the house was built sometime between 1851 and 1857 by Henry Wilson. The increase in value from \$2,000.00 to \$7,500.00 also points toward this conclusion.

Mrs. Grevenberg married Ernesto Martina and lived in this house until her death in 1871. Her succession includes a most interesting inventory of the contents and furnishings of the house which should prove most helpful for restoration purposes (Index to Successions, 1871, entry 2240, of the Records of St. Mary Parish).

The property was left to the three children issued from Mrs. Martina's first marriage, namely Gabriel L., George W. and Amelie, a minor. Mr. Agricole Grevenberg was appointed administrator, and in 1872 the property was advertised for sale at the price of \$6,500.00.

In 1878 Senator Donelson Caffery bought one third interest in the undivided estate from George W. Grevenberg, one of Mrs. Martina's three heirs (COB, BT, folio 139, entry 13761).

The year 1880 brought many changes of ownership. Mr. Caffery bought the third interest of Mrs. Amelie Grevenberg Wise on May 26. On June 21, Mrs. Eliza Kilgore Wilson, bought the interest of Gabriel L. Grevenberg, Jr. On July 23, Mr. Caffery exchanged his two third interest for the two third interest of Mrs. Wilson's in another of her holdings, returning full ownership of the house to the Wilson family (COB, B2B, folio 210, entry 1818B).

In 1900 the house was sold back to Mr. Caffery by Mrs. Wilson's daughter, Clara (COB, BLL, folio 142, entry 25803). In 1918, Donelson Caffery sold it to the Bourgeois family (COB, B3R, folio 354, entry 44788) who in 1938 sold it to Mrs. R. E. Caffery (COB, B5N, folio 317, entry 62926). In 1949, the house was purchased by the town of Franklin (COB, B7H, folio 438, entry 78799).

This typical example of the architecture of this area in the 1850's is one of the seven ante-bellum homes of St. Mary Parish listed in the Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry's booklet, Louisiana Plantation Homes. It could be made into a beautiful house-museum.

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Alexandre de Clouet  
by  
Sidney L. Villere  
New Orleans, Louisiana

Most of the French who had settled in Louisiana remained when the Spanish troops arrived and most of those in the service of the King of France automatically enlisted in the Royal Regiments of the King of Spain in the Louisiana Province. Among these were the DeClouet de Piedre, of whom Chevalier Alexandre François Joseph de Clouet de Piedre had been the first of the name to arrive in the colony. It is said that he first came to New Orleans during the month of February, 1758, thirty-one years of age, and an officer of the detached troops of the Royal French Army.

He had good reasons for coming to Louisiana since he had been compromised in a romantic intrigue with Beatrix de Choiseul, a sister of the Count de Stainville, French Minister under Louis XV. Fortunately, the Chevalier de Clouet was warned in time that he was the object of a "lettre de cachet". Adroitly taken by devoted friends from his domicile in Paris and conducted to Nantes, France, he embarked immediately for Louisiana. There he was in command at Fort Massaie until relieved by de Rocheblave in May 22, 1768.

On May 11, 1761, he married in the Saint Louis Parish Church at New Orleans, Demoiselle Louise Favrot, a native of the Parish of Orleans, daughter of Messire Claude François Favrot and Dame Louise Elizabeth Brulé. The two contracting parties were people of importance, and the witnesses were persons of rank such as the Chevalier Ponfrac de Mazan, Louis Charles de Grand Pré, Gille Augustin Payen de Noyan, Pelletier de la Houssaye, Chevalier Macarty, Chevalier François de Belisle, François Chauvin Delery, Chevalier Charles d'LeHommer and François du Tillet. The parents of the groom were named as Jean Martin de Clouet de Piedre and Dame Cesaie Gambier, both natives of Cambrai, France.

He was the first Commandant of the Arkansas Post under Spanish rule. Then, in 1774, he replaced Gabriel Fuselier de la Claire as Commandant of the Posts of St. Martinville and Opelousas and served until replaced by Captain Jean Farault de la Villebeuvre. Alexandre de Clouet died on July 30, 1789, at St. Martinville. At the time of his death he was honorary lieutenant-colonel at the Attakapas, and the royal order granting him a captain's full pay reached Louisiana after his death.

Louise Favrot de Clouet had her young brother, Pierre Favrot, who was also

her godchild, placed under the command of her husband at the Arkansas Post. When l'Abbé Robin wrote his Voyage dans la Louisiane pendant les années 1802-1806, he described Madame de Clouet: "I found her with several of her children. Never have I seen old age more venerable. Her hair whitened by the years made her gentle open face more touching, a face which kept a freshness rare at her age in the colony. Her manner had none of the backward coldness of the Creoles. They showed the affability and ease of a European who had spent her life in society. Her home was the best planned in the district. Her slaves, or rather her servants, were well dressed, had a satisfied air, and seemed assured in her presence. She was indeed the best of mistresses."

From the union of Alexandre François de Clouet de Piedre and Louise Favrot the following children were born:

1. Alexandre Joseph de Clouet, born January 23, 1763, died on February 9, 1763.
2. Joseph Marie de Clouet, born on February 6, 1764, and baptized on May 11, 1771. Died March 8, 1774.
3. Charles-Philippe Auguste de Clouet, born February 10, 1768, and baptized on May 11, 1771. He died on January 2, 1813.
4. Auguste Alexandre de Clouet.
5. Louis Jean Laurent "Brogner" de Clouet, born on February 6, 1766, and baptized on May 11, 1771.
6. Auguste Pierre Lanois de Clouet, born on March 24, 1768, and baptized on May 11, 1771. He died on November 18, 1774.
7. Jean-Baltazar Neuville de Clouet, born on May 28, 1770, and died on December 4, 1848.
8. Auguste Albert Lanois de Clouet, born on February 2, 1772, and died on February 13, 1772.
9. Marie-Louise Hyacinthe de Clouet, born on April 8, 1776.
10. Pierre-Auguste Lanois de Clouet, born on April 1, 1773, and died on November 18, 1774.
11. Joseph Augustin Favrot de Clouet, born on January 9, 1778.
12. Caroline de Clouet, born ca. 1779. Her baptism is dated May 11, 1781.

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LOUISIANA FOLKLORE AND FOLKLORISTS: A  
SURVEY OF PROJECTS COMPLETED AND IN PROGRESS\*

Dr. Patricia K. Rickels  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
Lafayette, Louisiana

There is perhaps no section of the United States with a richer heritage of folklore than southern Louisiana. The mixture of Anglo-Saxon, Negro, Spanish, French, and other traditions has produced a vigorous folklore, well worth collecting, studying, and, in some of its aspects, attempting to preserve, including as it does songs, stories, riddles, proverbs, rhymes, customs, beliefs

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\*This paper was delivered before the Attakapas Historical Association in New Iberia, La., on November 4, 1967.

and superstitions, arts and crafts, tools, recipes, festivals, traditional sports and contests, children's games and folk toys, and the traditions peculiar to particular occupations, religious sects, and minority ethnic groups.

The values inherent in this cultural heritage have not been lost on folklorists. Through the years a number of significant collections and studies have been made, although much more remains to be done, and several organizations have been founded to aid in the work, to which the Attakapas Historical Association, with its section on Traditions, is a very welcome addition.

The father of all Louisiana folklore studies was Alcée Fortier, who founded, in 1892, the New Orleans Branch of the American Folklore Society, later known as the Louisiana Folklore Association. Professor Fortier's Louisiana Studies and his collection of Louisiana French folktales are pioneer works in the field. It is a tribute to his efforts that after his death in 1914, folklore studies in the state languished. There were, however, several scholars at work on a variety of projects: Beginning in 1910, William A. Read published dozens of studies of Louisiana place names and dialects, culminating in Louisiana-French in 1931, a volume of interest to all students of the history and culture of the area. This work, long out of print, was re-issued in a revised edition by the Louisiana State University Press in 1963 and is still available.

Miss Corinne Saucier, a member of the faculty at Northwestern State College at Natchitoches for many years before her death in 1960, studied intensively and extensively the folklore of Avoyelles Parish, publishing, among other items, Traditions de la paroisse des Avoyelles en Louisiane (American Folklore Society Memoir #47, 1956).

The names of other students of Louisiana folklore in that period are too numerous to mention, but they include Hilda Roberts, whose collection of Louisiana superstitions was published in the Journal of American Folklore in 1927; Irène Thérèse Whitfield (Holmes), whose Louisiana French Folk Songs was published in 1939, the chapter on "Acadian Folk Songs" being issued as a separate publication by the Louisiana State University Press in 1955 in commemoration of the Acadian Bicentennial Celebration; Calvin Claudel, collector of Louisiana French folktales, and author of numerous folklore studies over a long period of years; Elizabeth Brandon, whose Laval University dissertation was on "Oral Traditions of Vermilion Parish"; Marie del Norte Theriot Haines, whose collection of tales in a variety of Louisiana French dialects is extensive but largely unpublished, and who, with Catherine Brookshire Blanchet, has collected round dances and play-party games in La Danse Ronde; and many others, whose work is not to be considered negligible because space prohibits its notice here.

In 1956 a renewed impetus was given folklore studies in the state by the founding of the present Louisiana Folklore Society. Since that date the Society has held annual meetings at which papers are read, has published a journal, the Louisiana Folklore Miscellany, and has issued several phonograph records. The papers read at annual meetings have covered a wide variety of subjects--from Acadian weaving and children's chariots to les traiteurs, country Mardi Gras customs, witch, ghost, and spirit lore, and Epiphany cakes. Many of these papers, together with other folklore studies, are published in the Miscellany, which has also recently begun the policy of reprinting old and rare documents, such as the anonymous Breaux MS Les Acadiens de la Louisiane which was reprinted with editorial notes by Professor George Reinecke of

Louisiana State University in New Orleans as the May, 1966, issue of the Louisiana Folklore Miscellany (Vol. II, no. 3), under the title "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore."

Recordings sponsored by the Society include two field collections by Harry Oster which are of interest to students of the Acadians: A Sampler of Louisiana Folksongs Sung by the Traditional Performers, with French transcriptions by John Guilbeau, issued in 1957; and Music of the Louisiana Acadians, with French transcriptions and linguistic notes by John Guilbeau and Roy Harris, issued in 1958. These recordings are available through the State Library.

The Folklore Society has by no means neglected the more material aspects of Acadian culture: at the 1965 meeting in Lafayette, members enjoyed a traditional déjeuner Acadien, by the courtesy of the Honorable Roy Theriot of Abbeville. Couch-couch, pain de mais avec des gratons, fromage de tête de cochon, and boudin were served, and their preparation and history explained by Mr. Theriot.

In 1964 a different sort of organization was founded, the Louisiana Folk Foundation, with the purpose of rewarding and thus helping to preserve the older forms of Louisiana folk music, particularly Acadian music. The Foundation, under the presidency of Paul Tate of Mamou, and with the financial support of the Newport Folk Foundation, has sponsored competitions at area festivals such as the Rice, Sugar, Dairy, Yam, and Cotton Festivals, giving cash prizes for traditional music, performed on folk instruments, and played and sung in the older traditional style. Authenticity of the folk tradition rather than musical talent or professional polish is emphasized; thus many elderly amateur musicians have been induced to perform. A tape recording of each competition is filed in the archives of the Louisiana Folklore Society at Louisiana State University Library. Presently funds available from the Newport Foundation have been exhausted, but the Foundation plans to continue its work, hoping that certificates or small trophies may have enough prestige to replace the cash prizes given in the affluent past.

At the present time a number of collectors are busy around this part of the state. Richard T. Wagner of the University of Southwestern Louisiana continues his work in folk medicine and music; Virginia Kyle Hine of New Iberia is constantly adding to her already remarkable collection of information and artifacts concerning Negro beliefs, remedies, and magic--often lumped in the popular mind under the category of voodoo or hoodoo; as Louisiana collector for the projected Dictionary of American Beliefs and Superstitions, being compiled under the general editorship of Professor Wayland Hand of the University of California at Los Angeles, I am always eager to recruit interested persons as collectors and would be delighted to send all pertinent information and material to anyone willing to assist.

One of the most encouraging developments lately for folklore studies in our area is the establishment this academic year of a course at Southwestern entitled American Folklore. This class, the only college folklore course presently being offered in the state, is open to upper classmen and graduate students and has an enrollment of forty. Many students had to be turned away for lack of space. Each student in the class must prepare an annotated collection of Louisiana folklore as a term project. You may be hearing from some of them.

## ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

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(Cross-indexed)

Vita B. Reaux and John R. Reaux

Lafayette, Louisiana

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### Simars de Belle-Isle among the Attakapas (1719-1721)

Vincent H. Cassidy and Mathé Allain  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
Lafayette, Louisiana

Since the Attakapas were acknowledged to be cannibals at the beginning of the 18th century, it is hardly surprising that no European traveler ventured into their territory voluntarily. No one had actually witnessed this cannibalism, but no one cared to investigate more closely. In 1719, however, a Frenchman named François Simars de Belle Isle, the unwilling guest of the Attakapas tribe for fifteen months, claimed to have seen them eat human flesh.

On August 14, 1719, De Belle-Isle, son of the mayor of Fontenay-le-Comte, in Poitou, (Marcel Giraud, Histoire de la Louisiane française [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966], III, 380), left La Rochelle on the Maréchal D'Estrées. (Simars de Belle-Isle, "Relation de ce qui m'est arrivé depuis le 14 Aoust 1719, quand je partis de la Rochelle avec le navire le Maréchal d'Estrées, pour venir en Louisiane, jusqu'au 10 Février 1721" in Découvertes et Etablissements des Français dans l'Ouest et dans le Sud de l'Amérique septentrionale (1614-1754), ed. Pierre Margry [Paris: Imprimerie D. Jouaust, 1886], VI, 320. Hereafter cited as Belle-Isle, "Relations." The translations are the authors'.) The captain and crew demonstrated total incompetence. When the captain of a free-booting ship, coming aboard the Maréchal D'Estrées, was asked if Cap Français (Santo Domingo) was still far to the west, he answered that they had long since passed it. He offered the Maréchal d'Estrées a pilot from Bordeaux named Clavié who had been captured from a Spanish ship. Clavié skillfully extricated the ship from its immediate difficulties, but proved little more experienced than the other pilot when it came to studying maps and directions.

The unfortunate Maréchal D'Estrées sailed for twenty days more in search of Louisiana, inadvertently sailing right past the mouth of the Mississippi. The ship was sailing along the coast southward toward Vera Cruz when the pilots finally advised a change of course.

Some days before, the Maréchal d'Estrées had passed a "bay, three leagues wide at its mouth," (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 324) where the crew had stopped to pick up fresh water. The ship had reached this bay again when it ran aground. "Everyone lived through some bad moments then," comments de Belle Isle. (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 325.) The situation was not improved by the reaction of the ship's officers: the captain locked himself in his cabin and went to bed; the first mate slobbered; and the ensign retired to his quarters swearing that, should the Lord grant him life, he would never sail again. Fortunately the pilot (de Belle-Isle does not state whether it was Clavié or the regular ship's pilot) took over the helm abdicated by the officers and proceeded to have the entire crew run back and forth from one side of the ship to the other. This maneuver finally succeeded in imparting a rocking motion to the ship, and with the help of a strong wind which blew toward the sea the ship finally sailed free. Once the emergency was over, the captain resumed command. The confidence of the passengers had been shaken, however, and they decided to proceed by land. The pilots, delighted with this decision, told them they would probably reach Ship's Island (near Biloxi) within four or five days and begged them to send a ship to rescue the Maréchal D'Estrées which otherwise was doomed.

The five passengers - De Belle-Isle, Duclos, Legendre, Courbet, and Abain - set out with their guns, their swords, some ammunition, and enough sea biscuit for four or five days. They spent the night on the shore of the bay and in the morning started off eastward, along the coast. For four days they traveled easily, but on the fifth day they were up to their necks in swampy land. (Belle-Isle, "Relations," p. 326.) They tried going inland, but, finding only more swamp, retraced their steps. When they were approaching the bay again they found a small boat which, they surmised, had drifted down the Mississippi to the Gulf and had been washed ashore there. The five of them dragged the boat across a point of land to the mouth of a small river which

flowed into the bay. The operation took them a whole day since they had to cut a path with axes. They killed a deer which they cooked and devoured ravenously. Their sea biscuit had long run out, and they were dependent on the game they found. However, de Belle-Isle reports ruefully, "we ate so much that we nearly died of stomachache because we had eaten without bread." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 32").

The next day they began rowing upstream and managed six or seven leagues the first day. After eight or nine days, they found that their river ended in a small pond. They went around the pond, hoping to find a stream flowing into it, but, finding none, had to drift back downstream to the bay. Enroute they lived off the few birds they killed and a dead deer they found and ate "though it was beginning to smell very bad." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 328). They finally reached the bay where several days later Courbet died of exhaustion and malnutrition.

The four survivors decided to try to search the open Gulf by boat but during the first day of rowing Legendre also succumbed to exhaustion. The three remaining finally returned to the very spot where they had originally landed and agreed that since they already knew there was nothing but marsh on the eastern shore, they should sail across the mouth of the bay and explore the western shore. Once across, de Belle-Isle and Abain set off to explore westward, Duclos being too weak to follow. A few hours later Abain also gave up and decided to return to Duclos. "With extraordinary courage," boasts de Belle-Isle, "I walked for four days" (Belle-Isle, "Relations," p. 332). On the fifth day his path was blocked by a river too wide to cross. As before, going inland was impossible since the land was nothing but swamps. He returned to bring the sad news to his friends both of whom were dead by the time he reached them.

Finding himself quite alone, de Belle-Isle first wanted to give up. For two days he ate nothing, but then driven by hunger he found the strength to gather a few oysters. Being out of ammunition, he could no longer hunt, but he cut some grass and boiled it. "I ate a great deal of it, but the first time I thought I would die." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 333) He also found some dry, nearly rotten tree trunks where lived worms "long as a finger and yellow." (*Ibid.*) By now his culinary standards had been modified, and he cooked the worms which he found very good.

Two weeks after the death of his companions, he sighted three Indians on an island in the middle of the bay. De Belle-Isle jumped into his little boat and rowed over to the island. The first Indian, never having seen a white man before, was frightened. The other two were braver, made him lead them to his boat, and immediately seized all his goods: "our guns, our swords, our silver flatware, my coat, and a few other things." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 334) Then they proceeded to strip him of all clothing and fed him some of the eggs they had gathered and cooked. His hunger assuaged, the Frenchman realized his nakedness and covered himself with his hand as he begged the Indians to give him back a shirt. They only laughed at him. When night came his nakedness no longer posed a problem of decency, but one of sheer survival. The mosquitoes attacked him so voraciously that he had to spend the night in

the water up to his neck.

The next day the Indians took him to the rest of the tribe which greeted him with horrible screams. He felt sure they were going to kill him, but instead, after letting him go hungry for a day and a half, they gave him some boiled roots. Two days later, several pirogues of Indians arrived and were greeted with the same screaming which de Belle-Isle had heard upon his arrival. "I did not know what it meant, yet I understood that it was their way, since they scream from pleasure as well as from pain." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 335)

De Belle-Isle spent the summer with these Indians, like them wandering, scrounging for food. In good weather the men killed bisons and deer, the women dug for roots. In rainy weather, they remained two or three days without food "drinking only water and throwing up without effort." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 336) They advised the Frenchman to do the same since it would be good for him.

When winter came, the Indians moved to the back part of the bay and began mistreating their captive. Until then his only complaint had been his nudity, but now they began demanding work from him, sending him to fetch wood or water, slapping him, and striking him with sticks.

De Belle-Isle tried writing a letter asking for help. He thought he had convinced the Indians to take the letter to the nearest white man. When twenty days passed without the messengers' returning, he inquired about them, and the Indians mocked him, saying that they had sent the letter indeed, but not to white men. They had had it carried to all members of their nation to be displayed as was their custom whenever they had something interesting.

This disappointment was followed by a harsh experience. The Indians went hunting and took their prisoner along. But they refused to give him a horse because "it was not becoming for a man of a different color" to ride one. (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 338) He had to run to keep up with their swift mounts, and whenever he stuck a thorn in his naked foot and stopped to remove it, the Indians flogged him on. On the third day, the hunting party found a herd of bisons and killed fifteen or sixteen of them. All ate eagerly since they had had no food for two days.

Afterwards, the Indians noticed some smoke. It led them to a group of "Toyals", an enemy tribe, one of whom they killed. They brought the dead Toyal back to their camp site and then, "one cut off his neck, another his arms while others skinned him. A few of them savored raw the yellow fat that was there, then they ate all of him." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 339)

They returned to their women who soon as they learnt that their men had killed an enemy, "began dancing for joy---and continued for two days without stopping once---holding in their hand a bone or a nail from an enemy their men had killed." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 340)

During this time, by sheer chance Belle-Isle's letter came into the hands of Juchereau de Saint-Denis, commander at Natchitoches. The letter had been shown to a tribe, the Bidai, among whom were some Assinaiis tribesmen friendly to the French. The Assinaiis took the letter to Saint-Denis who ordered them to bring him de Belle-Isle, dead or alive. Two Assinaiis, with a letter from Saint-Denis to de Belle-Isle, made their way back to the French prisoner,

gave him the letter, and by dint of threats of extermination obtained his release. After suffering two and a half months in one of their villages, de Belle-Isle finally reached Natchitoches (decently cloaked in a skin robe), on February 10, 1721.

It is interesting to note that de Belle-Isle names the other tribes involved in his story, but never his captors. There is no doubt, however that they were Attakapas, for Bienville, to whom Saint-Denis quickly sent de Belle-Isle, ordered an expedition to establish a fort near the bay where the five passengers had landed. Bienville equated the bay with Bay Saint-Bernard where de La Salle had earlier attempted colonization. Bienville placed twenty men and de Belle-Isle under the command of B nard de La Harpe and sent them on the Subtile, commanded by Captain B ranger. (Jean-Baptiste de Bienville, "Ordre et Instruction" in D couvertes et Etablissement, VI, 347) The expedition left in August 1721 and reached a bay which La Harpe decided was Bay Saint Bernard. John R. Carpenter states that La Harpe was mistaken, having reached instead Bay Spiritu Santo (Galveston Bay). (Histoire de la litt rature fran aise sur la Louisiane de 1673   1766 / Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1966 /, p. 246). In any case, the Frenchmen captured nine members of the tribe among whom de Belle-Isle had spent such unpleasant months and brought them back to Bienville. During the passage back to Louisiana the captain, Jean B ranger, took down a vocabulary of forty-five words, our earliest Attakapas word-list. (Albert S. Gatschet and John R. Swanton, A Dictionary of the Attakapa Language / Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1932 /, p. 21) The B ranger vocabulary leaves no doubt as to the identification of the tribe whom de Belle-Isle reported practiced cannibalism and described as wantonly cruel.

Both La Harpe and de Belle-Isle describe the countryside in hyperbolic terms. The terrain on which the Attakapas hunted bison is made up of "magnificent prairies," says de Belle-Isle, "and I saw forty to fifty-five leagues of that type of land which is the most beautiful country in the world." (Belle-Isle, "Relation," p. 340) La Harpe describes the land as "black, light, and ready for the plough from the very edge of the sea. (B nard de la Harpe "Il ne faut pas se laisser devancer   la baie Saint-Bernard et y envoyer les Suisses et les Allemands qui p rissent sur une c te de sable," in D couvertes et Etablissements, VI, 353). This latest statement does not chime in very well with the Belle-Isle narrative where every move inland from the shore of the bay led the Frenchmen into swamps.

In any case the directors of the Compagnie des Indes were counselled by Bienville and his advisors not to believe too readily the marvels that La Harpe claimed to have found "since his discourse is based simply on assumptions, and his desire to succeed in founding an establishment which has been entrusted to him could make him overlook possible difficulties in the execution of the project." (Bienville et al., "Les directeurs n'acceptent que sous reserves toutes les merveilles que raconte La Harpe" in D couvertes et Etablissements, VI, 351). In December of the same year Bienville ordered the project abandoned since the Indians had made it clear to La Harpe that they wanted no French fort in the vicinity.

The Indians had no need to worry. As C. C. Robin reports, the relation of de Belle-Isle's adventures circulated among the colonists, confirming their worst expectations about the Attakapas territory, and for several years no one

considered venturing into the dangerous domain of the "man-eaters." (C. C. Robin, Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane, de la Floride occidentale, et dans les isles de la Martinique et de Saint-Domingue, pendant les années 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, et 1806 / Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1911 /, III, 20-21, quoted in "Notes for a History St. Martin Parish," [unpublished], compiled by the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., 1957, p. 3). But commercial greed was finally to prompt a few daring souls into investigation, and the first traders reported that the Indians had become friendly. Since the first known trader set forth from New Orleans in 1735, less than fifteen years after de Belle-Isle's harrowing experience, either the Indians changed their ways very quickly, or, as seems more probable, de Belle-Isle considerably exaggerated.

Instruction for Mr. de Clouet  
Commandant of the Two Districts of Atakapas and Opelousas

Archivo General de Indias--Sevilla  
Papeles Procedentes De Cuba, legajo 2358

1. As soon as he arrives at his place of command, he will gather an exact and detailed census of the inhabitants of the afore mentioned posts, including in the census all ages and sexes, white as well as negroes, mulattoes, etc., whether free or slave. To get as accurate a census as possible, he will be empowered to commission people he will trust, assigning to each a particular territory.
2. He will do all in his power to keep peace and harmony among the inhabitants, two goals desirable for society. We enjoin him to use all his efforts to fulfill these goals and to make the inhabitants aware, by his courteous treatment of them, of the gentleness of our government. He will tell them that when I come through I will reward those who live as I wish.
3. He will collect two escalins for each arpent of land granted in his jurisdiction for surveying. This is a legitimate fee to cover his operating expenses and one which we have agreed to since my predecessor had granted four escalins for the surveying of Acadian lands, two of which went to the surveyor and two to the commandant.
4. We reiterate that he should promote the cultivation of tobacco which His Majesty wants grown to supply His Kingdom of Mexico. He should point out to the inhabitants the profits they can expect from it and the gratitude they should feel toward the King who tries to provide for their welfare.

N.. Bleaus 13 April 7, 1777.

(Translated by Mathe Allain, from a document in the collection of the late Dean H. Griffin.)

Official Organ

Attakapas Historical Association

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P.O. Box 107 St. Martinville, Louisiana 70582

Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard, President

Mrs. David R. Williams, Vice-Pres.

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## ATTAKAPAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION DUES SCHEDULE:

- I. Life Membership for Individuals - \$100.00
- II. Annual dues for Individuals
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  - (2) Contributing membership - \$15.50
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  - (1) Regular - \$5.00
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- V. Foreign dues - to be set later

Members wishing to complete their files can buy the 1967 volume for \$3.00. The 1966 issue is available at \$ .50.

## A.H.A. SPECIAL PUBLICATION NO. 2

Selected Acadian and Louisiana Church Records

Church records researched by Rt. Rev. Msgr. George A. Bodin, Pastor of St. John Cathedral (Lafayette, Louisiana) have been compiled into an alphabetical list of more than 17,000 individual names. Names of families long resident in the Attakapas area include early French, Canadian, Acadian, Spanish, German, and "American" settlers. The time period involved is especially from 1770 to 1850, but there are several hundred names from the Acadian records of St. Charles-aux-Mines (Grand-Pre) between 1707 and 1748.

Price: \$15.00. Individuals are asked to pay in advance.

A limited number of copies of Special Publication No. 1, Marriage Contracts of Attakapas Post with the 1774 Census of Attakapas Post have been reprinted and are available at \$7.75, postpaid. This is volume 5 of Mr. de Ville's Louisiana Colonial Marriage Contracts, and the only one published by the A.H.A. Part II, The 1774 Census of Attakapas Post, compiled by Jane G. Bulliard and Leona T. David, contains information about all seventy-three families listed in the census.

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The President's Report  
Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard

At the Annual Membership Meeting in April our guest speaker, Mr. Robert Thibodeaux, spoke on "The Acadian Accordion - Past and Present." In his informative and entertaining talk he stressed the need to safeguard and perpetuate the early Acadian music of our era.

Five members were elected to the Board of Directors which is now composed of the following: The Rt. Rev. Msgr. George A. Bodin, Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard, Mrs. Claude Carriere, Mrs. Sampson Delcambre, Miss Ruth Lefkovits, Mrs. Barbara V. McKoin, Mr. Harris Periou, Miss Pearl Segura, Mr. Albert Silverman, Miss Hazel Sockrider, Judge Ward Tilly, Mrs. David R. Williams, and Mrs. Ernest Yongue.

The Board met in Patterson at Idlewild Plantation on May 19th and elected the officers of the Association for the year 1968 - 1969. Their names and respective offices appear on the first page of this Gazette. I am honored to have been chosen your president, and hope that with the support of all members the Association will continue to grow and advance as it has during its first two years under the competent and efficient leadership of Mr. Harris Periou.

In appreciation for their outstanding contributions, donations of manuscripts for the Association's Special Publications, the Board designated Msgr. George A. Bodin, and redesignated Mrs. Janie Bulliard and Mrs. Leona David, as Patron Members for the current year. This is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a member.

As stewards of our heritages from the past, it is our responsibility to preserve them for future generations. As individual members we should interest and educate others in this endeavor. As an Association we can be a compelling force, both nationally and regionally, in seeing that memorabilia and legacies - historical records and structures, cultures, traditions, and landmarks - are not destroyed or lost.

As we start this new fiscal year, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president, and I feel confident that by working together we will attain many of the aims and objectives of our Association.

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Suggestions to Contributors

Mathé Allain, Editor  
Vincent Cassidy, Associate Editor

Papers are solicited in all the areas the Attakapas Association is interested in: traditions, landmarks, genealogy, and history. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced, and carefully documented. In general, the style of footnotes should conform to that recommended in Wood Gray, et al., Historian's Handbook (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964). Footnotes should contain full bibliographical information and will be incorporated within the body of the paper. If in doubt, check the form used in the current issues of the Gazette. Generally the Gazette prefers articles of four pages or less, but longer articles are frequently accepted. Articles should be sent to Editor, Box 1542-USL, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501.

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Queries

Queries of four lines or less, submitted by a member (with his name and address), will be printed as soon as possible. The query should give enough dates and places to identify the individual. The editor reserves the right to limit the number of queries per member, when necessary.

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 Vita B. Reaux and John R. Reaux  
 Lafayette, Louisiana

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## ADDENDA TO "ATTAKAPAS COLONIAL" ARTICLES - VOLUME II

Mrs. Ed Bulliard  
St. Martinville, Louisiana

The following is additional information received from provincial archives in France about people who figured prominently in two of the "Attakapas Colonials" series from Volume II of the Attakapas Gazette. Only the pertinent data is included and the records were translated from French by the contributor:

Volume II, No. 1, page B - "Genealogy of An Attakapas Colonial - Vincent Bara"  
Information from: Archives de La Marne et de la Province de Champagne  
JEAN BARA "dit" LE BLON - baptized 13 March 1700 at Jouy-les-Reims, son of Jean Baras sic (The mother's name was not given).

Volume II, No. 2, page 14 - "Pierre Potier - Attakapas Colonial"  
Information from: "Extract from the Civil State Register of the Parish of Notre Dame of Havre." (Sent to Jacqueline O. Vidrine who received it from Henri J. Molaison, 4 March, 1968)

30 April 1764 - Marriage of PIERRE POTIER, son of Pierre and deceased Marie Doucet, born in Beaubassin, Acadia (he has been living in Le Havre for one month, before that in Cherbourg and had been a prisoner in England for three years) age 24, with, ANNE MARIE BERNARD, daughter of Rene and of deceased Marguerite Bernard, born at Beaubassin in Acadia, (she has lived in Cherbourg for five years and in Le Havre for one month) age 21. Witnesses: Jean Baptiste Henry, Charles Michel Francois Dutot, Philippe Francois Mahault and Nicolas David Plainpel all living in this town.

The following, from the same source as the above, is included because the bride named was mentioned as a "sister to the deceased" in the inventory of the goods of Anne Marie Bernard, evidently made in France in 1783, and deposited in the St. Martin Parish Court House, Original Acts, Bk. 4 ½, No. 7. The following confirms this relationship and also gives the maiden name of the mother, the family of whom can now be satisfactorily traced in Histoire et Généalogie des Acadiens, by Bona Arseneault.

7 January 1766 - Marriage of JEAN BAPTISTE DOIRON, minor son of deceased Paul and deceased Marguerite Michel, born in Acadia, living in this town for 2 ½ years - age 22, with MARIE BLANCHE BERNARD, daughter of deceased Rene and deceased Marguerite Hebert, born in Acadia and living here 2 ½ years - age 19. Witnesses included Charles Henry "beau-frere de la ditte" and Joseph Dubois "cousin du dit."

## THE ATTAKAPAS TERRITORY: 1721-1747

Vincent H. Cassidy and Math   Allain  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
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Simars de Belle-Isle's grim tales had been repeated, circulated, and embellished until the ferocity of the Attakapas had become a by-word in the newly founded port of New Orleans. Bienville fully accepted de Belle-Isle's account. Why should he not have? De Belle-Isle was a gentleman and an officer and had reported events he had actually "witnessed." Therefore, in a memoir to the King of France (really to the Regent since Louis XV was too young to make decisions or exert power), written sometime between 1725 and 1726, Bienville dutifully reported of the Attakapas: "The name in our language means cannibals! In fact they eat the prisoners they take." (Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1704-1743 [Jackson, Miss.: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927], III, 529. Hereafter cited as MPA.) However, Bienville had some hope for them although they were still "neither armed nor clothed" and were "more skillful in fishing than in hunting." They had promised to settle in a village on the river and were preparing to do so. (Ibid.) Bienville, in the same memoir reported success in making the Chitimachas (or what was left of them after the punitive expedition sent to avenge the murder of St. Cosme) settle in villages on the left bank of the Mississippi. But the Opelousas were obdurate and would not settle down (MPA, III, 528).

Once settled in villages, the Indians were more likely to enter into contact with the French, sometimes to the detriment of both. In 1731 Madame de Mezi  res's plantation was burned, and two Frenchmen were murdered in that vicinity. Perier, who had replaced Bienville when the latter was recalled to France, had accused the Chitimachas (now reduced according to him to forty warriors) of both misdeeds. The King wished to have Bienville investigate the matter thoroughly before taking any punitive action. (MPA, III, 555) Bienville did and in 1733 reported that the Chitimachas had been maligned, and that the true culprits were members of the Natchez tribe. (MPA, I, 203-204)

In the same report, Bienville mentioned that Perier had reported that the Attakapas and the Opelousas (who were lumped together as cannibals) had come to New Orleans to ask for Frenchmen to be sent among them "to trade for their furs, their tallow, and their horses." Obviously, the Attakapas had not kept their earlier promise to settle down in villages since Perier promised to send them traders only if they agreed to live in villages. Perier had planned to send a Sieur de Monchervaux to investigate the possibility of trade, but had not done so. (MPA, I, 204) Bienville, moreover, doubted that trade with the Attakapas and Opelousas was worth the bother. "They are so lazy that they hardly have anything with which to cover themselves. It is true that they have some horses, but the difficulty of bringing them would cancel the profit that might be derived from this trade." (Ibid.)

Some friendly contact, however, had obviously already been established with these "ferocious" tribes. In 1731, for example, Saint Denis, the commandant of Natchitoches, had used a reinforcement of Assinai and Attakapas to fight the Natchez (F. X de Charlevoix, History and General Description of New France, John Gilmary Shea, trans. [Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962 reprint of the 1876 edition], VI, 118.) Moreover in 1735 we find Attakapas in New Orleans,

posing for the artist A. de Batz who sketched them in their scanty native costume. This activity sounds more befitting subdued Indians on a reservation being photographed by tourists in exchange for a small fee than a band of blood-thirsty man-eaters.

Either the Attakapas had never practiced cannibalism, or they had given up the practice in a span of very few years, or they were extremely particular in choosing their bill of fare since in 1737 Louis and Barthelemy Grevemberg registered their brand, and the cattle they were branding and raising were in the Attakapas territory. (Regisir /sic/ des marques de la Paroisse St. Martin, Comte des Attakapas, 1811 a 1812, p. 81. In the St. Martin Parish Court House) On July 29, 1739 their brand was sold to "Baptiste Bernard" or "Batiste Berard". (The Brand Book for Opelousas and Attakapas Districts 1739-1888, Louisiana Room, Dupre Library, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, La. says "Baptiste Bernard," but a marginal note in the St. Martin register indicates that the brand was transferred in 1739 by the Grevemberg heirs to "Batiste Berard.")

Bienville had doubted in 1733 that the Attakapas and Opelousas would be worth the trouble for traders. Others would think otherwise. As early as December 11, 1738, a certain Le Kintrek, called Dupont, and Joseph Blanpain (frequently spelled Blanpin) entered into a partnership to trade with the Opelousas and Attakapas for pelts, horses, and other merchandise ("Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana, Louisiana Historical Quarterly, VI, /Jan. 1923/, 283. Hereafter cited as "RSCL". The two partners further entered into an agreement with Gerard Pery on December 14 according to which they would sell him the entire stock of furs which they secured and Pery would reserve his French imports exclusively for them. (Ibid.) By another contract signed the same day, Le Kintrek and Blanpain agreed to sell Pery whatever tallow and bear grease they might obtain, the tallow at eight cents a pound and the bear grease at thirty cents a jar.

The tallow, according to Surrey, was used for illuminating purposes and sometimes mixed with myrtle wax to make candles. (Nancy Maria Miller Surrey, The Commerce of Louisiana during the French Regime, 1699-1763 /New York: Columbia University Press, 1916/, 261) The bear grease, or bear oil, was used as a substitute for olive oil and "was claimed by some to be quite as good for salads as the best grade of the latter." (Ibid., 262)

Blanpain's manifold activities in the Attakapas territory will be the subject of a later article, but he was far from being the only trader during the dark ages of Attakapas history. On June 16, 1745, Andre Fabry de la Bruyere described as a scrivener of the Marine promised to deliver to Sieur La Brosse 3307 pounds of deer skins, due a year from the signing of the contract, and he expected to receive them from his trade in the Attakapas. On July 16, 1746, he delivered his 3307 pounds of deerskin in parchment. ("RSCL", LHQ, XVI, /Apr. 1933/, 335) On February 1, 1747, the same Fabry declared to have dissolved two months previously his partnership for trade in the Attakapas with a certain Masse who will also be dealt with in a later article. Obviously Fabry remained in New Orleans fulfilling his bureaucratic functions while more adventurous souls such as Masse, who was to become one of the first settlers in the Attakapas territory, roamed the plains and collected the goods.

Note: The tombstone inscriptions collected by the Daughters of the American Revolution include the following: "Dame Christopher Berard Fuselier, espouse de Flu(?) Agricola Fuselier, nee dans la Paroisse St. Martin et decede le 16 Juillet 1812 a l'age de 72 ans." (Louisiana Tombstone Inscriptions /Copied and Published by the Louisiana Society N.S.D.R.R., 1954-1957/, VII, p. 19)

The said lady would therefore have been born in the Attakapas territory in

1740, an extraordinarily early date at which to find a family settled there. Unfortunately, a check of the tombstone in the St. Martinville cemetery reveals that the inscription reads: "Dame Christine Berard, widow of Agricole Fuselier, born in St. Martin Parish and died July 16, 1842 at the age of 72." (Authors' translation).

#### GERMAN CUSTOMS STILL RETAINED IN ROBERT'S COVE

Florence Boudreaux  
Lafayette, Louisiana

Deep in the heart of the French Acadian country of Southwest Louisiana, a delightful touch of Germany still exists. There Old World customs and cherished traditions have been preserved, and the joy of living, the hardy spirit, the vitality and industry so typical of the German character, have survived through almost a hundred years.

Robert's Cove, located a few miles out of Rayne, Louisiana, was settled in 1880 by a small group of immigrants who left their homes in Gelienkirchen, Germany, near the Holland border to escape Chancellor Otto von Bismark's kulturkampf. Bismark had initiated the kulturkampf to gain control of education and ecclesiastical appointments in the interest of political centralization, and Catholics, therefore, were the victims of severe discrimination.

Coming to America to practice their religion without restrictions, these immigrant families, nevertheless, maintained an intense loyalty for their native land and managed to preserve a part of their rich heritage in a land that could easily have submerged it. Eleven families had left Germany and come to the United States at the suggestion of Reverend Peter Leonard Thevis, at the time the German pastor assigned to Holy Trinity Catholic parish in New Orleans. Father Thevis knew that land was available in the section now called Robert's Cove and he helped them to negotiate for the purchase and settlement of that land. But times were not easy for these immigrants. The "Providence" crops which they raised failed at times, and the farmers were forced to work in the salt mines near New Iberia to supplement their meager incomes. With perseverance and industry they eventually prospered and, today, most residents of the Cove are well-to-do-rice farmers.

It is not surprising that a large majority of the residents of the Cove are still Roman Catholic, and that many of their customs and traditions are linked with the liturgical calendar of the Catholic church. Most important among these celebrations, and most typically German, is the observance of the feast of Saint Nicholas, which comes at the beginning of the Advent Season on December 6. Other special observances are associated with St. Agatha's Feast on February 5th; Easter; Corpus Christi; Rogation Days; and the Feast of St. Leo IV on July 17th.

The observance of St. Nicholas' feast on December 6th had been a custom in all European countries, but after the Reformation was suppressed in many areas. The custom survived in Holland, however, and the Germans of Robert's Cove, who had lived close to the Dutch, retained it also. Today, one resident relates:

On the night of December 5th, the eve of the anniversary of the death of St. Nicholas, the church choir gathers with the pastor at the church. One of the choir members is chosen to dress in liturgical robes to represent St. Nicholas, the famous bishop of Myra in Asia Minor. He wears the cope and mitre and carries

the crosier. Another choir member dresses as the typical American Santa Claus and the remaining choristers are attired in red sweaters and black trousers or skirts. Together with the pastor of the little church (St. Leo's), the bishop's impersonator, and the other choir members set out for a round of visiting with all of the young children of the Cove families. At one time, this meant visiting every home in the Cove, but with the increase in population, all the young children now assemble in a few homes and St. Nicholas visits only those homes.

When the bishop arrives the children greet him happily, sometimes fearfully. The choir members sing the Christmas carols (which they have rehearsed for weeks ahead) in German and in English as the bishop questions the parents about the children's behavior. Each child makes a small confession and is rewarded with sweets if he's been good and with a stick if he's been naughty. Holding the bags of goodies and sticks is Little Peter, a small boy made up to resemble a Negro. Little Peter was introduced into the bishop's entourage about fifteen years ago to bring the observance of the feast more in line with the traditional Dutch observance. Refreshments are served to the visitors, children, and parents; and St. Nicholas and his party continue on to the next home on their round of visits.

Years ago, the custom was carried out a little differently as one informant remembers:

Several of the young men, dressed as Santa Claus, (not the Bishop of Myra) rode from house to house on horse back carrying chains and whips. They were admitted to the homes and the younger children were put upon their knees to be interrogated as to whether they had been good or bad, and they were made to say their prayers. They were afraid of the riders because some of the older children who no longer believed in Santa refused to kneel to the poseurs. The house and grounds were searched and if the young culprits were found they were soundly whipped by the "Santa Clauses."

By the time the next generation came along, much of this custom had been done away with except in the immediate vicinity of the Cove. Whether this was because of the spread in distance between the homes or the severe treatment of the previous generation, I do not know.

In the next generation, the great-grandchildren, however, still celebrated the feast day of Saint Nicholas. Plates of corn were left on the table at each child's place on the eve of December 6th. This corn was for the good saint to feed his mule. In its place the children found, the next morning, candies, apples, oranges, nuts. Saint Nicholas was not seen.

There has been a revival of the custom for the great-grandchildren. St. Nicholas again makes his rounds on the

eve of his feast day to find out if the children have been good or bad and if they say their prayers. Now he is accompanied by Santa Claus who finds out what each wants for Christmas, and Black Peter, who distributes candy to each child. A choir of older children and young adults makes the rounds with the bishop in his robes. Although it falls during Advent, there is much feasting and merrymaking among the adults present. The names of the bishop, Santa, and Black Peter are kept secret until they are seen in person. The little Negro may be a derivation from the legend that the Bishop of Myra had traveled extensively through Egypt and Africa. He may be a slave child who cared for the bishop's mount on his travels.

The customs associated today with the feast of St. Nicholas incorporate the traditional observances of the feast of the Holy Innocents on December 28th, and the feast of the Boy Bishop (Pope Gregory IV) on March 12th. In 844 the church established the feast of the Boy Bishop on March 12th. For this occasion, one boy, dressed in pontifical robes, impersonated the patron saint of schools and choirs, Pope Gregory IV. Accompanied by two other boys, serving as chaplains, the bishop "examined his fellow students ... also adults, with questions on religious doctrine. He gave praise or reproach and distributed presents or punishments ... From the eleventh century on ... the Boy Bishop's Feast was transferred in most countries to December 28th." (Francis X. Weiser, Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), pp. 132-133.)

In All About Christmas, Maymie R. Krythe points out: "In medieval times, in some lands, especially Germany and England ... Boy Bishops were selected each year on St. Nicholas' feast day... /other students/ were obliged to obey his canonical commands ... until December 28th, Holy Innocents Day." (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954, pp. 27-28)

In the fourteenth century the Feast of the Boy Bishop was moved to December 5th, the eve of the feast of Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of children. "Gradually the impersonation changed from the original one of Saint Gregory (which had been forgotten long before) to that of Saint Nicholas." (Weiser, Handbook, p. 133) Weiser further points out that "In central Europe, Innocents' Day, December 28th, is one of the traditional 'spanking' days of the ancient fertility cult. Groups of children go from house to house with branches and twigs, gently striking women and girls." (Weiser, Handbook, p. 133) This tradition perhaps, helps to explain the custom that crept into the Saint Nicholas Feast observance in Robert's Cove. In more recent times, Weiser adds, "In numerous countries ... the role of the bishop was assumed by adults. Representing Saint Nicholas, the venerable figure now paid his annual visit to the children on the eve of 'his' feast." (Weiser, Handbook, p. 133) It is interesting to note that Chambers in the Book of Days, describing current observance, notes that "The actors ... were choristers of the church." (Robert Chambers, ed., The Book of Days (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1914), 11, 665)

Another feast of the liturgical year observed until about ten years ago was that of St. Agatha's Feast, on February 5th. This feast was observed with the blessing of home-baked bread which was brought to church for the blessing. Queried about the types of bread made at this time - pumpernickel, rye, black

bread - an informant answered that it was always just white bread. The blessing of foods which now takes place on Easter Sunday has replaced this custom.

Since the Easter bunny is supposed to have originated in Germany we can expect that it still flourishes in Robert's Cove. But besides the usual religious observance of the feast, the German settlers added the blessing of eggs after the Easter Mass. Families are allowed to bring their finest dyed eggs to church where they are placed on the altar rail following the Mass. The pastor blesses them with a special prayer: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, to bestow thy benign blessing upon these eggs, to make them a wholesome food for Thy faithful, who gratefully partake of them in honor of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ." In more recent years the families of Robert's Cove have been permitted to bring any foods which they plan to serve on Easter for the blessing. This Easter fare is called Weihessen (blessed food).

One informant relates that the shells of the eggs must be discarded in a special manner since they are blessed, and he remembers, as a child, bringing them to his mother for special disposal, usually burning.

Easter is a day for the family gathering and the traditional meal, but Easter Monday is the day for visiting godparents. Children are taken by their parents to the homes of godparents who usually have Easter gifts for them. Easter eggs and other sweets are shared on these visits.

Another old German custom still preserved in the Cove is the observance of Rogation Days. This custom originated in France about the year 470 when St. Manertus, Bishop of Vienne, "introduced processions and the public recitation of Litanies, after the calamities that had afflicted the country ... These 'rogations' are earnest prayers to ward off calamities and obtain God's blessings upon the crops." (Hugo H. Hoefer, ed., St. Joseph Daily Missal /New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1961 /, p. 412)

In Robert's Cove:

On the feast of St. Mark (April 25) and on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday immediately preceding Ascension Thursday, the Litany of the Saints is recited by the pastor and congregation as they walk in solemn procession, preceding the daily Mass. In earlier times the procession was from the church to the cemetery but at present is made within the church. These ceremonies are well attended by the many farmers of the Cove who come to implore God's blessings on the new crops.

One of the informants says that in Germany the Rogation Day processions, always held in the spring, were made from the church to one of the many wayside shrines, the waldkirch or "forest church."

The feast of Corpus Christi, established in the thirteenth century, is celebrated on the Thursday following Pentecost Sunday. In the later Middle Ages, processions carrying the Blessed Sacrament became pageants. They are still held in many European countries. In Robert's Cove the feast is observed on the Sunday following the Thursday of Corpus Christi:

On the eve of the celebration (Saturday) the pastor assembles all available working forces, men, women and children. They clean the church and grounds and the cemetery. Men go to the wooded areas of the Cove and return with large limbs cut from water oaks and six-foot gum trees. The sprigs from the oak limbs are wound around rope to make garlands for decorating the

church and the improvised altar in the community hall. The gum trees are used to outline the procession route. Papal flags in gold and white fly from the church windows.

On Sunday, Mass is celebrated in the parish church after which the solemn procession is held. Several men carry the canopy over the monstrance which holds the circular crystal in which the Eucharist is exposed. Little girls, dressed in white angel costumes, strew flowers in the path of the procession. (All girl children in the Cove own these angel costumes.) Small boys carry gold and white papal flags. The complete procession route is about one eighth of a mile long. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given from the improvised altar in the community hall.

The patron saint of Robert's Cove was originally Leo the Great. However, the German settlers, realizing that his feast came at a time of year when they were busiest with the rice farms, asked the pastor, Rev. Sylvan Bushcer, O.S.B., to choose for them a patron whose feast would come at a time of year when they could observe the day as a holyday. Leo IV, whose feast is January 17th, was chosen. Since 1885 the feast has been observed by general attendance at Mass. Today, the church parish sponsors a barbecue to which all who are in any way affiliated with St. Leo's Church are invited.

In all phases of the life cycle, the same devotion to the Catholic faith pervades the customs of Robert's Cove residents. The new-born infant is brought to the church for christening either the day of its birth or the day following. This duty is the responsibility of the godparents. In earlier times, the godparents had to be members of the family, and the grandparents were usually chosen first, with the older brothers and sisters of the infant given second preference. The infant usually carried the name of the godparents of the like sex.

All weddings used to be held between November and January for two reasons: because the young man chose to break away from the family for the start of a new life only after then and before the time for planting; and because the rice warehouses used for the receptions and dances were then empty, the rice having been sold. Except on rare occasions, all weddings were at Nuptial Masses. Receptions lasted all day and while the women remained indoors to serve food and coffee, the men congregated outdoors around the beer barrel. Long after the newly-weds had gone, the wedding guests continued the reception with music, songs, and dancing. The warehouses are rarely, if ever, used today and the time for weddings is no longer rigidly fixed, but for the most part, marriage vows are still exchanged at a Nuptial Mass, and beer is still the favorite drink served at weddings.

For many years, wakes were held in the homes; today, however, many of them are held in funeral homes, with a recitation of the rosary every half-hour. When wakes were held at home, it was traditional to provide boiled ham sandwiches and coffee. Without exception, all funerals are held at a Requiem Mass. The people of Robert's Cove have retained in their burial service a favorite German hymn, brought from their native land. The choir sings the sad, haunting strains as the coffin is lowered into the ground, and the mourners join in the singing.

#### Allerseelen Gesang

Die Fügung wird Keinen verschonen,  
Der Tod verfolgt Scepter und Kronen:  
Eitel, eitel ist zeitliches Glück.  
Alles, alles fällt wieder zurück,  
Fällt wieder zurück.

Der Leib, von der Erde genommen,  
Kehrt dorthin, woher er gekommen,  
Reichthum, Schönheit, Witz, glänzende Macht,  
Alles decket die ewige Nacht,  
Die ewige Nacht.

Ich bleibe nicht ewig im Staube,  
Das lehrt mich der heilige Glaube,  
Denn die Seele vereinigt sich,  
Mit dem Leibe, wie glücklich bin ich,  
Wie glücklich bin ich.

Die Thränen sind Zeichen der Liebe,  
Doch sind sie natürliche Triebe.  
Nur um Eines, um Eines bitt' ich:  
Betet täglich, ach betet für mich!  
Ach, betet für mich.

Roughly translated the hymn means:

#### Hymn of All Souls

Of everyone, no one is spared.  
Death follows scepter and crown.  
Futile, futile is earthly happiness.  
Everything goes back again,  
Goes back again.

The body coming from the Earth  
Is swept all away whence it came.  
Wealth, beauty, wisdom, glorious power  
All fill the eternal night,  
the eternal night.

I will not be eternally dust  
As my holy belief teaches me,  
For the soul reunites with the body.  
How happy I am,  
How happy I am!

Tears are signs of love.  
Indeed are they nature's urge.  
Only to One, to One I beg,  
Pray daily - O pray for me!  
O, pray for me!

Like all people, the German residents of Robert's Cove had superstitions, but, the informants claim, none were ever taken too seriously. There were certain taboos about foods: at one time certain combinations of foods were considered dangerous: milk and fish; milk and figs; fish and cane syrup. Various "signs" were given special significance. For example:

It was considered bad luck to enter and leave a house by a different door.  
It was a bad omen for a bird to enter a house through an open window.

A bird pecking at a window glass meant someone in the family would die.

It would bring good luck to throw a broom out of the window before moving anything else when moving from one house to another. On the other hand it would bring bad luck to change a door into a window.

Dropping a dishtowel meant company was coming.

There were also folk beliefs associated with weather prediction: cows could sense a change in weather such as an impending storm or a cold wave and demonstrate their feeling by seeking shelter and huddling together long before the bad weather happened. Plentiful and bothersome flies and mosquitoes announced rain. "Wan die Haner schreien dan gebt es Regen." (When the rooster crows, it rains.)

It was believed that on May 13, 14, and 15, the feast days of St. Robert Bellarmine, St. Boniface, and St. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle, the wind would always blow from the north and the weather would always be cold. Those three saints were therefore known as Eis Heilige, Ice Saints. As usual with rural folks many beliefs were associated with the moon. If the changes of the moon were predicted in the almanac for the morning hours, it meant a rain period would follow. If the changes were predicted for the evening, one could expect a dry spell.

The moon also influenced the growth of plants. Planting was best done when the moon is new. Plants would thrive as the moon waxes. (The late Mr. Leonard Habetz, Sr., the father of Miss Marie Habetz, of Robert's Cove, was quoted as having scoffed at this belief saying: "I don't plant in the new moon, I plant in the ground.") It would be useless to plant when the moon waned. Tomatoes, for example, planted at this time, would develop much foliage, but bear no fruit. The moon also influenced hair growth: hair cut during the waxing of the moon would grow out faster than it cut when the moon is waning.

A custom which strengthens the ties between the families of Robert's Cove and helps to preserve their German culture is the clan gathering. For the past eleven years, the Zaunbrecher family, which traces its ancestry back to Nicholas Joseph Zaunbrecher, pioneer settler of the Cove, has assembled annually for a reunion. Six hundred and fifty were present at the fifth family reunion which began with a special Mass to pray for Zaunbrecher souls, past and present. On a walk through the cemetery which separates the church from the reunion grounds, the younger generation members may read from the tombstones, the names of their departed kinsmen. Box lunches are brought along and kegs of German beer complete the meal. The traditional German "sangerfest" fills the afternoon hours. German folk songs, sung to the accompaniment of fiddles, accordions, and guitars are the order of the day as joyous voices join in singing such old favorites as "Muss I Denn, Muss I Denn," "Auf Widerseh'n," "Die Lorelei," "Bier Her," and "Du, Du Liegst Mir Im Herzen."

One informant states that the Heinan family and the Hensgen family also have begun to hold these gatherings in more recent years.

Imported folk customs usually tend to disintegrate under the influence of American life. It is, therefore, with admiration that we observe a group of immigrants who have managed to preserve much of their culture and customs. When asked why they were able to do so, some of the informants thought that it was because of the common religion, occupation, and ethnic background which they shared in a small area. Others thought that it was because of the clannishness of the group which forbade their association with people of other nationalities or faiths. One interviewee reported that his father had married a French girl and been ostracized by his native group. Another informant,

however, stated that there was no ostracism intended in this case, but that the reaction of the native group may have been interpreted as such since they were greatly disappointed that the marriage was not celebrated at a Nuptial Mass. One informant stated that she was never allowed to date non-Catholics, but all informants agreed that much was changing today.

#### List of Informants

Berken, Casper (Mr. and Mrs.) "Folklore of Robert's Cove."  
Interviewed in Robert's Cove, La., December 2, 1967.

Dischler, Richard (Mr. and Mrs.) "Feast of St. Nicholas and  
other Customs in Robert's Cove." Interviewed in Crowley,  
La., December 26, 1967

Habetz, Marie Catherine. "Folklore and Customs in Robert's  
Cove." Interviewed in Robert's Cove, Louisiana,  
December 2, 1967.

Zaunbrecher, Mrs. Paul. "Customs of Robert's Cove." Interviewed  
in Crowley, La., December 2, 1967.

Zaunbrecher, Reverend Charles. "History of and Liturgical Feasts  
Celebrated in Robert's Cove." Interviewed in Lafayette, La.,  
November 27, 1967.

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#### NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

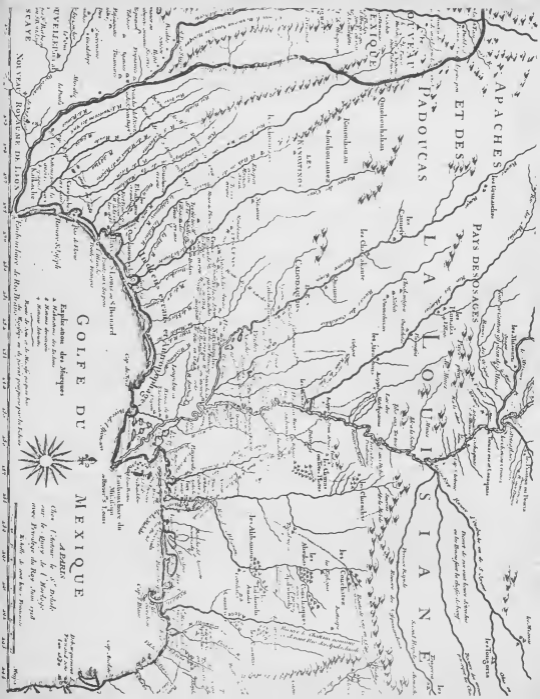
Mrs. Mathé Allain teaches French at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. She edited and translated Louisiana's earliest extant play, Poucha-Hounma or The Festival of the Young Corn, and has written articles on French, English, and Spanish literature.

Mrs. Florence Boudreaux is librarian at Cathedral-Carmel Elementary School. She was graduated from U.S.L. with a major in English and a minor in Library Science.

Mrs. Jane Bulliard has had a life-long interest in genealogy. She compiled with Leona David The 1774 Census of Attakapas Post which was part of the Attakapas Historical Association Special Publication No. 1 and served as Chairman of the publication Committee during the first two years of its existence.

Dr. Vincent H. Cassidy teaches Ancient and Medieval History at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. He is the co-author with Amos E. Simpson of Henry Watkins Allen, a biography of the Civil War governor of Louisiana, and The Traveling Man, a juvenile version of Allen's life. His articles have appeared in numerous scholarly journals and the L.S.U. Press just released his study of the medieval views of the Ocean, The Sea Around Them.

Vita and John Reaux have been interested in genealogy as far back as they can remember, but have been able to indulge full time in their avocation since Mr. Reaux retired from the Post Office. Their work in genealogy has already appeared in the Attakapas Gazette.



# Attakapas Historical Association

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## Officers:

Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard, President

Mrs. David R. Williams, Vice-Pres.      Miss Hazel Sockrider, Treasurer  
Mrs. Ernest Yongue, Recording Sec.      Miss Ruth Lefkovits, Corres. Sec.

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## DUES SCHEDULE:

- I. Life Membership for Individuals - \$100.00
- II. Annual dues for Individuals
  - (1) Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership - \$3.00
  - (2) Contributing membership - \$15.50
  - (3) Patron membership - \$20.50
- III. Annual Institutional Dues
  - (1) Regular - \$5.00
  - (2) Sustaining - \$10.00
- IV. Canadian dues - same as American dues, but payable in US dollars only
- V. Foreign dues - to be set later

Members wishing to complete their files can buy the 1967 volume for \$3.00. The 1966 issue is available at \$ .50.

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## Attakapas Gazette

Editor: Mathé Allain      Associate Editor: Vincent Cassidy  
Circulation Editors: John and Vita Reaux

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## Suggestions to Contributors

Papers are solicited in all the areas the Attakapas Association is interested in: traditions, landmarks, genealogy, and history. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced, and carefully documented. In general, the style of footnotes should conform to that recommended in Wood Gray, et al., Historian's Handbook (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964). Footnotes should contain full bibliographical information and will be incorporated within the body of the paper. If in doubt, check the form used in the current issues of the Gazette. Generally the Gazette prefers articles of four pages or less, but longer articles are frequently accepted. Articles should be sent to Editor, Box 1542-USL, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501.

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## Queries

Queries of four lines or less, submitted by a member (with his name and address), will be printed as soon as possible. The query should give enough dates and places to identify the individual. The editor reserves the right to limit the number of queries per member, when necessary.

# THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard

Mark your calendar today! The Second Annual Conference will be held on November 9, 1968 at the Holiday Restaurant in New Iberia. A brief business meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. Mrs. Williams and her committee have planned an excellent program which is printed in this issue of the Gazette. Members will be able to hear all of the speakers as none of the section meetings will be held concurrently. I hope each of you will plan now to be with us to enjoy this day of fellowship and learning.

Our Association now has an individual membership of 233, including 1 Honorary and 3 Patron members. With 13 Regular or Sustaining Institutional members, total membership at present is 245. While 207 active members represent 16 parishes in Louisiana, another 20 Associate members are from California, New York, North Carolina, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Five persons from Canada and France complete the roster.

At the June 17, 1968 meeting of the Board of Directors, the following chairmen were appointed and approved to serve for the 1968-69 fiscal year: Genealogy, Mrs. Paul Kramer; History, Dr. Vincent Cassidy; Landmarks, Mrs. E. P. Terrell, Jr.; Traditions, Mr. Harris Periou; Gifts and Loans, Mrs. Herbert Heymann; Membership, Mrs. Dudley David; Publications, Mr. Earl Vallot; Program, Mrs. David R. Williams; Finance, Miss Lucille Arceneaux; Publicity, Mrs. Fred G. Fournet; Historian, Mrs. Leo Bulliard, Sr.; Parliamentarian, Mrs. F. L. Jordan; Auditing Committee, Miss Lucille Arceneaux and Mr. J. B. Landry.

A new member of AHA, the Rev. Clement Cormier, C.S.C., of Canada wrote an article promoting AHA aims and publications. We appreciate his kind remarks published in the CAHIER of "La Société Historique Acadienne," Moncton, New Brunswick.

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### QUERY

Mrs. Bush Ewing, P.O. Box 55, Wimberly, Texas 78676 seeks parents, birthplaces and birthdates on Michael (Miguel) PEVAUTAU and Apalonea BROUSSARD married 22 September 1795, St. Martinville, La. Exchange information on Pevoto, Pivetot, Pevautau, etc. family.

SECOND ANNUAL ATTAKAPAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Date: November 9, 1968

Place: The Holiday Restaurant, Highway 90 West, New Iberia, Louisiana

9:00 - 9:30 Registration and Coffee - The Alton Room  
(Registration fee: \$2.00; Luncheon: \$2.50)

9:30 - 10:00 Business Meeting: Mrs. Jerome Broussard, President

10:00 - 10:45 Traditions Section: Mr. Harris Periou, Chairman  
Theme: Voodoo  
Speaker: Mrs. Virginia Kyle Hine

10:55 - 11:40 History Section: Dr. Vincent Cassidy, Chairman  
Theme: Acadian and Non-Acadian Cajuns  
Speaker: Dr. Hosea Phillips

11:50 - 12:30      Genealogy Section: Mrs. Paul Kramer, Chairman  
Theme: Heraldry  
Speaker: Mrs. Marie Celeste R. Speiss

12:45 - 1:45 Luncheon  
After lunch Mr. Joe Champeaux, Director of City Planning, Lake Charles, Louisiana, will speak on "Continuity with the Past: A Primary Consideration for City Planning." Introducing the Speaker: Mrs. E. P. Terrell, Jr., Chairman, Landmarks Committee.

3:00                      Adjournment

Send reservations to: Mrs. Sampson Delcambre  
306 Missouri Street  
New Iberia, Louisiana 70560

## A.H.A. SPECIAL PUBLICATION NO. 2

## Selected Acadian and Louisiana Church Records

Church records researched by Rt. Rev. Msgr. George A. Bodin, Pastor of St. John Cathedral (Lafayette, Louisiana) have been compiled into an alphabetical list of more than 17,000 individual names. Names of families long resident in the Attakapas area include early French, Canadian, Acadian, Spanish, German, and "American" settlers. The time period involved is especially from 1770 to 1850, but there are several hundred names from the Acadian records of St. Charles-aux-Mines (Grand-Pre) between 1707 and 1748.

Price: \$15.00. Individuals are asked to pay in advance.

A limited number of copies of Special Publication No. 1, Marriage Contracts of Attakapas Post with the 1774 Census of Attakapas Post have been reprinted and are available at \$7.75, postpaid. This is volume 5 of Mr. de Ville's Louisiana Colonial Marriage Contracts, and the only one published by the A.H.A. Part II, The 1774 Census of Attakapas Post, compiled by Jane G. Sulliard and Leona T. David, contains information about all seventy-three families listed in the census.

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## COURTSHIP IN ACADIANA

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Abbeville, Louisiana

In recent years folklorists have become increasingly aware of the value of the French heritage of Louisiana and have shown a growing interest in preserving the traditions and folkways of the Acadians. This paper on courtship and one on marriage to appear in the next issue present a field collection of traditions and practices in Acadiana collected from nine informants. All the informants are Caucasian and with one exception are of French-Acadian extraction and of the Catholic faith. Their ages range from thirty-five to eighty-three, and their education varies from no formal schooling to four years of college. With one exception informants reside in Vermilion Parish: three are from Abbeville, two from the Meaux community between Abbeville and Kaplan, and two from Gueydan. The other informant lives near Duson in Lafayette Parish.

A native of Abbeville, I have always lived in an area steeped in the traditions of the French culture. My paternal grandmother was of Acadian descent; however, she died early and I never knew her. My father had some knowledge of conversational French, but the children of our family did not learn to speak French and we were not reared in the French tradition. Still, personal remembrances of Cajun lore stimulated my interest and have given impetus to my study of Louisiana folklore.

The data collected for this study has been compared with the traditions and practices recorded by other writers. As a basis of comparison I have used a translation of a portion of the Anonymous Breaux Manuscript, which appears in a recent issue of the Louisiana Folklore Miscellany. ("Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," from the Anonymous Breaux Manuscript as edited by Professor Jay K. Ditchy, selected, arranged, and translated by George F. Reinecke, Louisiana Folklore Miscellany, II, No. 2 [May 1966].) Entitled Les Acadiens de la Louisiane and dated 1901, the manuscript was in the possession of Former Chief Justice J. A. Breaux of Louisiana when he died in 1926. Other source materials which I have used are cited in the footnote entries.

Following the presentation of the data are biographical sketches of the informants, whose initials serve as a means of identifying the information they have contributed.

Amusements of young people of marriageable age

In bygone Acadiana it was the custom of young people to gather in homes where there were girls of marriageable age. One writer describes this custom prior to the turn of the century:

Young people call on such families on Saturday afternoon to play berlingue, chiquette, pigeon vole, colinmaillard and la main chaude . . . Danses Rondes or game-songs are performed and songs appropriate to the occasion are sung. (*Ibid.*, p. 38)

Although the description above antedates the twentieth century, the danses rondes, or play parties as they were also called, continued to be popular as recently as the nineteen twenties and early thirties. These social gatherings were especially popular during "le carême," or

Lenten season, the forty days between Mardi Gras and Easter, when public dance halls remained closed. Since it was considered sinful to dance to instrumental music during Lent, the dancers themselves, unaccompanied by musical instruments, sang their own songs and clapped their hands to the various rhythms. The following description is given in the preface of Les Danses Rondes:

It was the custom to gather for the "dances rondes" on Sunday morning after church at the home of the family who extended the invitation; and there people of all ages would dance until midnight. The group would keep changing constantly throughout the day, no one person remaining for the whole time except the host. His duty was to furnish the guests with coffee, or, if the crowd grew too large, with cool well-water; with the empty front rooms of his home, moving the furniture to the attic or barn; with a front yard, if the weather permitted dancing on the grass; and with some simple method of illumination after sundown. Often a ring of as many as a hundred dancers would circle around a huge oak in the moonlight, or by the light of lanterns and lamps with reflectors, attached to trees or house corners. If the group divided into more than one circle, it usually formed three rings of dancers. It seems that anyone able to walk took part in the "dances rondes" from the very young to the very old; but it was chiefly the pleasure of those of marrying age, for the "rondes" are actually courting dances. (Marie del Norte Theriot Hains and Catherine Brookshire Blanchet, Les Danses Rondes [Abbeville, Louisiana: R. E. Blanchet, Distributor, 1955], p. 4.)

These socials, it is to be noted, were not only recreational; they also provided opportunities for boys and girls to meet and for young couples to become seriously interested in each other. Early Acadian elements are also apparent in the following description contributed by Lelia C. Labauve of Abbeville:

I remember the parties in the twenties when I was a girl. The parties were held outside. The Negroes used sheets around big enclosures for their parties. They hung the sheets from the trees and the clotheslines and at night they hung lanterns from the trees. The people had their own string bands and played the same tunes and rhythms as today. I heard these things from a Negro girl who worked for our family.

The white people had parties similar to theirs, but they did not have enclosures and theirs were not so private. They had their parties under the trees. There were night danses rondes, too, and in the wintertime there were little brass bands and social dancing.

On Sundays after Mass during Lent everybody would congregate in a certain home. All the beds and other furniture were taken out to the back porch or put in the barn. Every room in the house was occupied. They used the house all day long from about nine o'clock in the morning till four or five on Sunday afternoons and again at night at the same social. This was in the twenties.

I remember because that was my time. (LCL)

Another informant, Enedia M. Fermental of Abbeville, also told of informal get-togethers where old and young alike, but especially the young, gathered:

. . . for parties, you know. Get-togethers, you know? singing and having a good time, not going to no things like they are now. But we had always a good time, like, you know, often times when you all used to come home, get together, little children outside, and singing, playing games, and like barbecue and stuff like that. Well, that was nice, you know, because they didn't had much these days--no record player, no radio, no television goin' on, you see, like that, so we had to have our own music and singing. (EMF)

When asked about the play parties or dances rondes, she added:

Well, that's what it is. "Ring-a-Rose," you know, goin' around, you know, like this, get together. And then we'd say "Go in and out the windows," (Richard M. Dorson, Buying the Wind [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964] pp. 242-243. 'Go in and out the window . . . . For this dance a circle was formed; sometimes the girls were inside and sometimes the boys, alternately weaving in and out. The danse ronde was also called "Marching Around the Levee" and "Marching Around your Lover." . . . Another variant couplet to this dancing game was "Stand forth to your lover and measure your love. . . ." Lovers would then show the extent of their love with an arm, finger, or fingernail.') you know, singing, you know, that was having a-drinking pop, you know, outside. In the shade we'd play all together. Then we'd sometimes play card games . . . and checkers. Well they hardly didn't had a thing much to do. And then at night sometimes we'd go to a dance. They had beautiful dances in the old days, you know. Mothers and daddies would gather the children and go to the dance, and [that way the young people would] meet together. That would be a nice place. (EMF)

### Mischief of jealous rivals

As is often the case in any gathering of young people, there was a certain amount of rivalry in affairs of the heart. Some of the young men who had been jilted were sometimes vindictive and would take vengeful steps to mitigate the injuries to the heart and the ego. An opportune place for playing these pranks was the public dance halls. One such incident is described here:

During the courtship there were the "barbarian dances," where a boy would try to get even with another boy he was jealous of. There was one next to our home that I remember. The dance hall was built as a circle with all the windows open. There were no screens or windows to close. One girl sitting in a window had "rolls" or "knots" in her hair. The boy who was jealous because she had jilted him, he just took a razor and scratched it off.

Another one used red pepper he had in bottles. He just walked in and let it fall in the dance hall to break up the dance out of revenge. When they'd walk in the pepper it would get in their noses and burn them.

They'd also get revenge in the horse-and-buggy days. I know instances when they took horses and unharnessed them and harnessed them again facing the buggies. Sometimes they would unscrew the

hubs that kept the wheels intact, and when the buggy started to move it would fall down, or they would slash the harness in places with a knife and everything would fall to pieces. When my brother who lives in Milton got married, they believed in doing things like that. (LCL)

### The Courtship

In bygone days courtship among the Acadians was practiced in accordance with the old established traditions. Customarily, when matrimony was the objective, a third party often interceded for the prospective groom:

When there is a question of matrimony between members of two families, an accommodating relative or friend of the boy's clan undertakes to negotiate. He calls on the girl's family, always on a Saturday. He ceremoniously lays before them the good qualities and wealth of his protege, while the girl's parents counter with eulogies of their daughter, her virtues and agreeable qualities. ("Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," op. cit., pp. 38-39)

### Dating

Young people today enjoy a relative amount of freedom in their dating. Formerly, however, a boy and a girl did not "go out with each other" without their parents' consent. According to Elisabeth Brandon,

The young man had to get permission from the parents of the young lady to be able to come calling on her on Sunday afternoons. If he came calling regularly on Sunday afternoons, everybody knew that his intentions were serious and that he was courting her. (Elisabeth Brandon, "Les Moeurs de la Paroisse de Vermillon en Louisiane," University of Houston, Houston, Texas. Extract of doctoral thesis "Moeurs et Langue de la Paroisse Vermillon en Louisiane," Laval University, Quebec, March 1955, as reprinted in le bayou, LXV [Spring 1956], p. 76.)

An informant from Abbeville said this about the length of the courtship:

Sometime it'd be two, three years. We had to be sure that we knew the boy good, or we knew the girl good . . . and be sure that the marriage would keep on going as nice as it could be. (EMF)

Another informant from Gueydan said, "Nick came every Sunday for about a year before we got married. We were twenty-two by the time we married." (EAB)

Still another informant, this one from Meaux, gave this version of the courtship as she knew it when she was a girl:

When the young man courted his girl, he called on her on horseback, always on Sunday afternoons. They sat in the parlor and were always chaperoned, (Lauren C. Post, Cajun Sketches from the Prairies of Southwest Louisiana [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962], p. 147.) 'Sunday afternoon visits became a regular event. The young couple would sit in the kitchen by the hour, while the rest of the family sat in the adjoining rooms--with the doors open.' and if they went anywhere, they were chaperoned, too. When the boy and the girl decided to marry, the boy called on a weekday to ask her parents'

consent. (Ibid., 'Thursday night was the time for this step.') If the parents consented, the wedding would be held a month later. On the next Saturday the couple got the marriage license and then took instruction from the priest. Marriage banns were published in the church on three Sundays in succession. (Ibid., p. 148.

'The license was secured the next Saturday, and on Sunday the banns were read in church. For three consecutive Sundays the announcement of their intent was read. On the next Saturday the wedding took place.') Today the marriage banns are usually published only once, but they are repeated if more money is given to the church. (PHH)

Enedia Fermental had this to say in regard to courtship and permission to marry:

We'll go in and talk about that to our mother and daddy, and the grandfather and grandmother would get around, and then we'd have to ask them if they'd think it was nice, if it was all right, if their boy was suitable to marry, you know, and if the girl was suitable to get together and marry with him, you see, because sometimes they thought--well, this boy was not good enough for my girl and wouldn't make a good living for them, and so they tried to talk them out, you see, not married, because they didn't thought it would be a good marriage.

So mother and daddy would always try to have them close to the house, build them a house right next to their house, and all the family would stay all around, the grandfather and the grandmother, the daddies and the mothers, you know. They wouldn't do like they do now, move away, oh, far, far, away. That was a nice life. We had a nice life.

And when the boy would come and court, well, they had a big front room, a living room we call that these days, you know, and the boy and the girl would get together in the living room settin' down and talking. There was no riding in cars like there are now. They stayed there, and when it get kind, you know, of crowded in the house, well, the boy and the girl would go and sit outside under the trees having a good time talking, and they didn't act crazy. They was talking slow, and they wouldn't, uh, you know how these days--oh, I don't know what you call it--but, uh, a boy and a girl they're gonna holler and they're gonna talk fast and, oh, act crazy. They were serious, and it was a life that they were going through, and they knew what they had to do. (EMF)

#### Publication of banns

In regard to the publication of the marriage banns, another informant stated that if for some dubious reason the wedding had to be a hurried affair, then for additional money given to the church the banns were published only once. The reason, she stated, was that there was less time for someone to protest the marriage if this should be the case. (EAB)

The wedding banns were formal announcements made in the church in regard to the marriage agreement between the families of the betrothed. It was traditional in some families to have the "promesse de mariage" in writing as a kind of contract between the respective families. A translation of the banns of the marriage of Rodolphe Perry and Amanda Theall, whose wedding was solemnized December 2, 1903, follows:

Promise of marriage between Rodolphe Perry, the major and legitimate son of Charles Perry and Marguerite Bourque, of the first part, and Amanda Theall, minor and legitimate daughter of Joseph Theall and Bathilde Guidry, of the other part. . . . Marriage December 2 between the hours of one and two. (THP)

### The hope chest

There were no showers for the bride as is customary today. In those days, Enedia Fermental said, a young girl kept a "hope chest" in anticipation of her wedding day:

Well, you know, they would call that a chest, saving chest. As the girl would gather stuff and put that in her hope chest. A big, big chest the father and the mother would make, and they'd gather . . . towels and sheets and pillowcases and everything like that. That chest would be full, full when it'd be the time for the girl to marry. (EMF)

### Preparations for the wedding

The month preceding the wedding was filled with much excitement. As Brandon describes it, there existed the custom of calling on relatives, from house to house, to announce the engagement, invite all the family, and listen to advice, teasing, and grievances. The couple were often given gifts with which they could "begin their housekeeping." (Brandon, *op. cit.*, p. 77.) Three informants commented about the activities preceding the wedding:

Preparations were started one month before the wedding. The house was repaired and the furniture was done over. When the neighbor's saw a young man's horse at the girl's home on Sundays and the cleaning and repair work being done, they knew there would be a wedding soon.

After the parents gave their consent for marriage, the couple visited all the relatives. They gave the young couple advice and many gifts. These gifts were practical ones. I remember this, because I received such gifts. Before my wedding I was given a hen and fifteen baby chicks. But the gift I prized most was a meat grinder. I found this the most useful of all, because in those days we did not have ground meat unless we owned a meat grinder. When our house burned I lost this meat grinder, but an aunt gave me another one that I still use today. (PHH)  
Hazel R. Hebert, who resides in Meaux, recalled the preparations made in the month before her marriage:

Relatives made quilts, blankets, repainted furniture, and even made my wedding clothes. I got all my quilts and blankets this way. The men received gifts, too. The gift of a calf, a mule, pigs, chickens, and so forth, helped them to get started in farming.

The bride was given the usual advice: what she had to look forward to and what preparations she would have to make to start a family. A midwife often helped with the birth of the children, so the bride was told the things she should know about midwives. (HRH)

(Editors' note: The courtship is obviously over. Mr. Hoffpauir's data on Acadian Weddings will be presented in the following issue.)

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE INFORMANTS

- (EAB) Edith Aube Benoit (Mrs. Nicholas Benoit)--Age 73. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Benoit has no formal education and speaks mostly French. A life-long resident of Vermilion Parish, she resides in Gueydan, Louisiana. Mr. Benoit is deceased.
- (RC) Reed Clostio--Age 40. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Clostio has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. A resident of Kaplan, Louisiana, he is a public school teacher.
- (EMF) Enedia Meaux Fermental (Mrs. Oneal Fermental)--Age 57. White. Father was French-Acadian. Maternal grandmother, Spanish. Maternal grandfather, Choctaw Indian. Catholic. Mrs. Fermental has three years of elementary schooling. A resident of Abbeville, Louisiana, she combines homemaking with part-time baby-sitting. Mr. Fermental is deceased.
- (HRH) Hazel Roy Hebert (Mrs. Daniel Hebert)--Age 35. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Hebert has a high school education. She lives on the family farm in the Meaux community between Abbeville and Kaplan. Her husband is a teacher at the Meaux High School.
- (PHH) Pauline Hubert Hebert (Mrs. Gaston Hebert)--Age 68. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Hebert, a retired public school teacher, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She taught at the Meaux High School until her retirement in 1965. Her paternal grandparents were from France, and her mother was of Acadian descent. Mrs. Hebert lives on her farm in the Meaux community. Mr. Hebert is deceased.
- (LCL) Lelia Comeaux Labauve (Mrs. Courtney Labauve)--Age 62. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Labauve is a retired public school teacher. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She taught in the elementary grades in Forked Island and in Abbeville until her retirement in 1966. She presently teaches first grade and religion classes at Mount Carmel, a Catholic parochial school in Abbeville. She resides in Abbeville.
- (THP) Thelma Hoffpauir Perry (Mrs. Adles Perry)--Age 49. White. German-Acadian. Protestant. Mrs. Perry is a high school graduate. A housewife and part-time bookkeeper, she resides in Abbeville, Louisiana.
- (DR) David Roy--Age 59. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Roy attended the third grade, but his education is somewhat limited. He has played the French accordion since the age of twelve, although his daughter, Mrs. Daniel Hebert, says he really started to play the instrument when he was five years old. He began to play for public dances when he was fifteen, and he played in a Cajun band for forty-two years. He has played for many wedding dances but retired this year. A house painter, he lives in rural Duson southwest of Lafayette.
- (HS) Henry Saltzman--Age 83. White. German-Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Saltzman is self-educated. A life-long resident of Vermilion Parish, he is a pioneer citizen of Gueydan, Louisiana, where he makes his home. He is a retired barber.

ROSEDALE PLANTATION  
Carrie Poirson Wolford  
Jeanerette, Louisiana

The beauty and splendor that was Rosedale Plantation is no more. The lovely imposing house with rounded white columns across the front stood empty for a number of years. During the flood of 1927 it was occupied by refugees from the inundated areas and carelessly burned to the ground.

Research in St. Mary and Iberia Parish courthouses indicates that the house was built in the early 1830's by Thomas H. Thompson, an American planter, who settled among the Creoles on Bayou Teche.

The following is the title chain on Rosedale Plantation:

St. Mary Parish Courthouse, Franklin, La.

1833 Conveyance Book D - Folio 120, entry 1917

T. H. Thompson - J. P. Taylor

Thomas H. Thompson sells to Joseph P. Taylor of Jefferson County, State of Kentucky, half of the following described property--lately purchased by Thompson from John W. Jeanerette, and being the same that the said Thomas H. Thompson bought from John Brownson. A sugar Plantation and tract of land also situated in this Parish on the Bayou Teche adjoining to the former; and bounded above and on the East side by lands belonging to the Estate of Alfred and Edmund T. Thruston and on the West side by lands belonging to Henry Penn. Property purchased by Thompson from Brownson and Jeanerette.

1840 Conveyance Book 10, Page 133, no. 4847

Thomas H. Thompson buys from Joseph P. Taylor, of the United States Army residing in the State of Kentucky, that certain tract of land or sugar plantation situated in said Parish of St. Mary on Bayou Teche called "Cote Aux Paces," where said Thompson now resides, bounded above by Alfred and Edmund Thruston below by Henry Penn and Baron Malus -- buildings and improvements thereon.

300 acres of land purchased by Thompson and Taylor from the United States at the land office in Opelousas lying in the rear and adjoining the tract of land last described on the West side of said Bayou. (Elizabeth Hudson, wife of Thomas H. Thompson)

Successions--2040 and 2079

Mr. Thomas H. Thompson died intestate April 15, 1860. His daughter Caroline E. Thompson, wife of Dr. James B. Dungan, died 1863.

(In the succession of Caroline E. Dungan reference is made to that certain tract of land [Pine Grove] lying in Parish of Iberia on both sides of Bayou Teche, bounded above by the lands of the estate of Thomas H. Thompson [Rosedale] dec'd. and below by the lands of Mrs. Celestine Penn dec'd. on the West side of Bayou Teche.)

Iberia Parish Courthouse, New Iberia, La.

Conveyance Book 20, Page 268, no. 2535

Reinscription

J. W. Sheerer & Co.

Dickson A. Given Jr.

Nicholas Browse Trist (Notary Public)

Parish of Orleans

Dickson A. Given, Jr. and John W. Sheerer, residents of New Orleans - "Rosedale Plantation" which was adjudicated to said J. W. Sheerer at a judicial sale of the Estate of Thomas H. Thompson made on June 2, 1873 by Joseph W. Lyman, administrator of said Estate.

August 8, 1876 Conveyance Book 6, Page 63, no. 1998 - Cash Sale

David Patton (Vendor)

John W. Sheerer & Co. & Dickson A. Given Jr.

Andrew Patton to David Patton

Oct. 10, 1877 Conveyance Book 6, Page 543, entry 2264

Andrew Patton acquired from David Patton - said Plantation was acquired by the present Vendor from the present vendee June 12, 1877 sale price \$8,000.00

Jan. 7, 1879 Conveyance Book 6, Page 586, no. 2288

Hammond S.W. to Andrew Patton

November, 1881 Conveyance Book 10, Entry 3156

Antoine Carriere acquired by purchase from Andrew Patton from David Patton

Nov. 24, 1881

Henri Carriere acquired the same by purchase from Mrs. Sarah A. Hammond and Mrs. Mary Jane Wormald per act passed before me notary on the 16th of December 1880 - recorded in said Recorders Office in Book 8 of Conveyances Folio 200 to 207.

Dec. 19, 1883 Conveyance Book 11, Page 443, entry 3655

Leonard Brulatour bought from Antoine Carriere -- St. Amelie formerly "Rosedale Plantation" - Cash sale. The said Plantation was acquired by Antoine Carriere from Henrico Carriere Nov. 23, 1881 as recorded in Book 9 - Folio 169 to 172, Entry 2928

Conveyance Book 13, Page 218, Entry 150 A

At Sheriff Sale April 2, 1885

Alfred Gonsoulin bought St. Amelia formerly known as "Rosedale Plantation" property of Leonard Brulatour (absent from the State of La.) for the price of \$11,020.00 Mortgage passed before Edgar Grima, Dec. 15, 1883.

Dec. 2, 1889 Conveyance Book 19, Page 177, no. 2178

Alfred Gonsoulin (Vendor) sells to P.E. Sandager. That certain tract of land with all the buildings and improvements thereon, and thereonto belonging, situated on both sides of the Bayou Teche in said Parish of Iberia. Known as St. Amelia Plantation formerly "Rosedale" containing fourteen hundred and 84.100 superficial arpents for the sum of \$17,279.24

Mar. 17, 1919 Conveyance Book 91, Folio 236, Entry 33186

B.R. White and Frank C. Labit, residents of Crowley, La. (Lessors)

Peter E. Sandager of Minneapolis, Minnesota (lessee).

(Mr. Frank C. Labit occupied the house during the early 1920's and was the last resident that I recall.)

RELUCTANT VISITORS FROM LA SUPERBE  
Mathé Allain and Vincent H. Cassidy

In the late 1730's and early 1740's traders began to venture into the Attakapas territory, but the record they left was sparse. Shipwrecks continued to be responsible for somewhat reluctant visitors to the coastal area whose adventures constitute our best source of information on the aborigines. There is, for example, the story of the French vessel La Superbe. (See "The Wreck of La Superbe in the Gulf of Mexico en Route from Vera Cruz to New Orleans, May 1745," trans. Heloise H. Cruzat, The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XI [Apr. 1928], 179-208). This ship, commanded by the Chevalier Grenier, sailed from New Orleans for Vera Cruz on March 14, 1745. Grenier's primary purpose was the purchase of flour for the Louisiana colonists. The ship took fifteen days to reach Vera Cruz, arriving on March 29th. She started back on April 19th and, had navigation been normal, should have reached New Orleans at the latest by the second week of May. She was accompanied on the return trip by a Spanish brigantine, the St. Jean Baptiste, which was a slower ship than La Superbe. When Grenier realized that La Superbe was running short of water, he decided to sail ahead and leave the brigantine behind. The two ships parted ways on April 27.

On April 29th, La Superbe was in thirty fathoms of water, but soundings revealed a muddy bottom. Grenier shifted his course northward, expecting to reach the mouth of the Mississippi. Not finding it, he decided that he was still west of the Mississippi and continued to sail eastward for three days. At this time a crew member thought he recognized a sandbank as one he had encountered one day away from La Balize, when sailing from Pensacola to New Orleans. Concluding that La Superbe had passed the mouth of the river and was now east of New Orleans, Grenier reversed his course and sailed for three days along the coast, generally southwest. At this point, seeing Indians on land, the members of the crew tried to get information from them, but obtained none. Two days later, however, six of the Spanish sailors on board went to shore and came back triumphantly, announcing that Indians had "told them in Castilian that from where they were they had but three days' journey" to reach Pensacola ("The Wreck of La Superbe . . .," p. 202).

Thinking himself west of Pensacola, Grenier maintained his southwesterly course, hoping to reach the mouth of the Mississippi. During the night of May 12th, however, the ship ran aground on a sandbank, and began to break up. The ship was abandoned and general confusion ensued. The sailors ransacked the chests and trunks which washed ashore, "plundering the best and throwing the rest into the sea" (*Ibid.*, pp. 203-204). But the situation was not completely desperate: there was water on the reef, and over two hundred sacks of flour had washed ashore.

Grenier sent three men to explore the country. They returned with eleven Indians, three of whom crossed over to the reef. Grenier offered them some bread "which they ate with apparent relish, for it required more than six pounds apiece to satisfy them." (Charmion Clair Shelby, ed., "Grenier's Journal of his Voyage to Vera Cruz, 1745," LHQ, XXI [July, 1938], 641). The Indians, whom other survivors identified as

Attakapas (See, "The Wreck of La Superbe . . .," pp. 193, 196, 198), Grenier described as "six feet tall, strong and robust." He added "they live on fish only. They speak with their teeth closed together, and they click the tips of their tongues much as one does when calling chickens." (Grenier's Journal . . .," p. 641)

Grenier then sent a party to explore further. They returned after a few days, having been guided by the Attakapas to a great lagoon on the other side of which, the Indians said, the natives were hostile. Understandably, the explorers turned back.

The Spanish crewmen still insisted that they had been near Pensacola and therefore east of the Mississippi. (There is some confusion in the record here and earlier editors have decided that they were trying to reach Pensacola, but such an interpretation does not fit with what follows.) The Chevalier organized his men and began a journey west. He himself took a hundred men to march along the shore while fourteen men under the leadership of Sieur Yvon, his second-in-command, were to follow in the small canoe left from La Superbe.

Grenier and his group set off on May 24. Eventually, when the coast was running consistently to the south, they knew that they had been west of the Mississippi all the time and were now in fact going toward Tampico. Grenier and twenty-seven men finally reached that city on July 5th, after forty-four days of march. On the 21st of August he and his few remaining men left Tampico by ship and at last reached New Orleans on September 26th.

Meanwhile the canoe sailed along the coast, according to Grenier's instructions. The men soon lost sight of the main party which was able to make better time. After coasting for fifteen days they found one of Grenier's men who had been left behind with an abscessed thigh. They picked him up and continued four more days along the same course. They then encountered unfriendly Indians who tried to shoot them with arrows. They distracted the Indians by throwing them bolts of materials. Six of the men decided that they would rather die on land than at sea and left the canoe to continue their journey on foot. This, at any rate, is the version told by the survivors ("The Wreck of La Superbe . . .," pp. 189, 190, 193, 196, 198), but the Chevalier's account seems more plausible: "barely having time to embark, they had left six men behind" (Grenier's Journal . . .," p. 655).

The nine survivors in the canoe were running out of provisions. They decided to go back to the scene of the wreck where they might obtain some of the flour washed ashore from La Superbe. At the scene of the wreck they found that the Attakapas had now erected huts and appropriated all the flour left behind. The Indians, however, "received them well enough and even swapped provisions for some merchandise, such as bolts of silks, shirts. . ." ("The Wreck of La Superbe. . .," p. 196).

The fierce Attakapas, whom Simars de Belle-Isle had encountered less than twenty-five years earlier, had apparently changed a great deal since Sieur Yvon, Grenier's second-in-command for this hapless trip, decided to remain among "these Savages who appeared to be good folks . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 196).

The remaining eight sailors embarked "trusting to the mercy of God" (*Ibid.*, p. 198). They finally reached the Balize and arrived in New Orleans on August 14, 1745. There they learned that the St. Jean Baptiste, the slow sailer, had arrived long ago.

A search party had already been organized to find Grenier and La Superbe. Sieur Hervier, who had not accompanied Grenier on this trip but had been associated with the Chevalier since 1743, (See "Grenier's Journal . . .," pp. 631-635) had directed Joseph Blanpain to find out what had happened to the lost ship. Blanpain was to follow a route through Bayou Plaquemine and the Chitemachas Lakes to the Bay of St. Bernard (present Matagorda Bay). Knowing the dangers implicit in such an expedition Blanpain made his will on June 19, 1745, empowering his partner Joseph Le Kintreck, also named his universal legatee, to act in his name during his absence ("Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana," LHQ, XV [Oct. 1932], 670-671).

Blanpain's trip was unsuccessful, and on September 9 Pierre Hervier made a new agreement with him to go again in search of the missing persons. One of the survivors who had reached New Orleans on August 4th was to accompany him ("R.S.C.L.", LHQ, XIV [Oct. 1931], 573).

On September 23, Blanpain was in Pointe Coupee ("R.S.C.L.", LHQ, XV [Oct. 1932], 671). He was still there on the 26th, the day the man he was searching for arrived in New Orleans (Ibid.). Grenier comments in his journal that someone had gone to search for Sieur Yvon ("Grenier's Journal," p. 655). By December 24, Blanpain was back in New Orleans, signing contracts ("R.S.C.L.", LHQ, XVII [Jan. 1934], 201). His search had undoubtedly been unsuccessful since the Superior Council recorded no further statements by any rescued Frenchmen.

Whether Sieur Yvon died of exhaustion among those "good folks" the Attakapas, was killed, or lived on among them somewhere in the maze of swamps and bayous of Southwest Louisiana remains a mystery. He seems to have been, however, along with the Bernards and the Grevenbergs, one of the first white men to have settled voluntarily among the Attakapas.



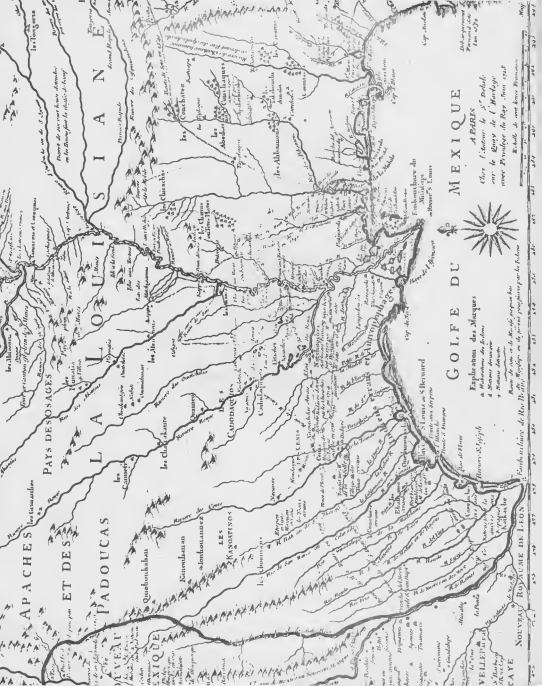
This representation of an Attakapas Indian appears on the title page of Harry Lewis Griffin's The Attakapas Country (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Company, 1959). It is based on drawing by A. DuBatz in 1735.

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Roy V. Hoffpauir teaches English at the Gueydan High School. He is presently doing post-graduate work at the University of Southwestern from which he received both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees.

Carrie Poirson Wolford is a charter member of the St. Mary Landmark Society. She has been researching and studying old homes for several years now, and her work has previously appeared in the Attakapas Gazette.

Mathé Allain, Vincent H. Cassidy, as well as Vita and John Reaux are on the editorial staff of the Gazette. Their biographical notes appeared in Vol. III, no. 2.



APACHES  
ET DES  
PADOUAS

PAYS DES APACHES  
PAYS DES PADOUAS

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Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard, President

Mrs. David R. Williams, Vice-Pres.      Miss Hazel Sockrider, Treasurer  
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#### DUES SCHEDULE:

- I. Life Membership for Individuals - \$100.00
- II. Annual dues for Individuals
  - (1) Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership - \$3.00
  - (2) Contributing membership - \$15.50
  - (3) Patron membership - \$20.50
- III. Annual Institutional Dues
  - (1) Regular - \$5.00
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- IV. Canadian dues - same as American dues, but payable in U.S.dollars
- V. Foreign dues - to be set later

Members wishing to complete their files can buy the 1967 volume for \$3.00 (\$5.00 for Institutional members). The 1966 issue is available at \$ .50.

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#### Attakapas Gazette

Editor: Mathé Allain      Associate Editor: Vincent H. Cassidy  
Circulation Manager: Harris Delahoussaye

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#### Suggestions to Contributors

Papers are solicited in all the areas the Attakapas Association is interested in: traditions, landmarks, genealogy, and history. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced, and carefully documented. In general, the style of footnotes should conform to that recommended in Wood Gray, et al., Historian's Handbook (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964). Footnotes should contain full bibliographical information. If in doubt, check the form used in the current issues of the Gazette. Generally the Gazette prefers articles of four pages or less, but longer articles are frequently accepted. Articles should be sent to Editor, Box 1542-USL, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501.

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#### Queries

Queries of four lines or less, submitted by a member (with his name and address), will be printed as soon as possible. The query should give enough dates and places to identify the individual. The editor reserves the right to limit the number of queries per member, when necessary.

### THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT Mrs. Jerome A. Broussard

On September 16th the District Director of Internal Revenue in New Orleans ruled that the Attakapas Historical Association is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization. All contributions made to the Association are deductible by the donors as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Also all bequests, legacies, transfers, and gifts are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes.

Our second Annual Conference on November 9, 1968, was well attended. The day was most enjoyable and the programs informative and educational. May we again express our appreciation to our speakers, Mrs. Virginia Kyle Hine, Mr. Joe Champaux, Dr. Hosea Phillips, and to Mrs. A. L. Speiss who was unable to attend but prepared a paper on heraldry which was read by our genealogy chairman. We also wish to thank Mrs. Speiss for the coat of arms which she offered to design and paint as a door prize open to all registrants of the Conference.

Many of our members enjoyed the reception on December 2nd which the Association and the City of St. Martinville cohosted to honor the Honorable Bona Arseneault, noted historian, genealogist, and statesman from Quebec. A large number of the delegation from Canada who were in Louisiana for the Acadian Festival in Lafayette were our guests.

As we look forward to 1969 we hope our Association will continue to progress, and we wish for each of you special blessings for the coming year.

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#### QUERIES

Mrs. John D. Winchester, 5020 Wyoming Trail, Fort Worth, Texas 76118, would like to correspond with descendants of Eugene B. Olivier de Vezin (b. ca. 1822, Louisiana) who married Laure de la Lande D'Alcours (b. ca. 1828 in Cuba). Eugene B. was the son of Major Charles Olivier and his second wife, Wilhelmina Perrault. Who were the parents of Laure?

Mrs. John R. Reaux, Route 1, Box 348, Lafayette, La. 70501 wishes information concerning the daughters of Joseph Broussard, dit Beau-Soleil, (b. ca. 1702; d. in St. Martinville, 1765) and Agnes Thibodeau.

## A.H.A. SPECIAL PUBLICATION NO. 2

Selected Acadian and Louisiana Church Records

Church records researched by Rt. Rev. Msgr. George A. Bodin, Pastor of St. John Cathedral (Lafayette, Louisiana) have been compiled into an alphabetical list of more than 17,000 individual names. Names of families long resident in the Attakapas area include early French, Canadian, Acadian, Spanish, German, and "American" settlers. The time period involved is especially from 1770 to 1850, but there are several hundred names from the Acadian records of St. Charles-aux-Mines (Grand-Pre) between 1707 and 1748.

Price: \$15.00. Individuals are asked to pay in advance.

A limited number of copies of Special Publication No. 1, Marriage Contracts of Attakapas Post with the 1774 Census of Attakapas Post have been reprinted and are available at \$7.75, postpaid. This is volume 5 of Mr. de Ville's Louisiana Colonial Marriage Contracts, and the only one published by the A.H.A. Part II, The 1774 Census of Attakapas Post, compiled by Jane G. Bulliard and Leona T. David, contains information about all seventy-three families listed in the census.

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## ANNOUNCEMENT OF GENERAL MEETING

The general meeting of the Attakapas Historical Association will be held at 7:30 p.m., Monday, January 20, 1969 at the Art Center for Southwestern Louisiana, St. Mary Boulevard and Girard Park Drive, Lafayette, Louisiana. The program will consist of a panel on Non-French Settlers in Early Louisiana. The panelists will include Mrs. A. J. Anders (Lafayette), Mrs. C. O. Theriot (Lafayette), Mrs. Lionel Wolford (Jeanerette), and Mrs. Paul Kramer (Franklin). The moderator will be Dr. Henry Dethloff of the University of Southwestern Louisiana History Department.

The contributions of French settlers to early Louisiana history and culture have tended to obscure the contributions of other nationalities. The object of this panel discussion will be to focus attention on non-French settlers and their contributions. It is hoped that any member with information on the topic will come prepared to present it when the discussion is open for questions and comments from the floor.

## ACADIAN MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Roy V. Hoffpauir  
Abbeville, Louisiana

The Wedding Day

The wedding day was a busy one for everyone, including the bride. According to Hazel Hebert, of Meaux, the couple went to confession together early in the morning, usually about seven o'clock, the wedding being held in the afternoon.<sup>1</sup> After confession the young lady returned home where she greeted relatives and friends, many of whom brought gifts. The bride had dinner with her family, and the groom had dinner at his parents' home. After dinner the bridesmaids helped the bride prepare for her wedding. They helped her with her bath, her hair, and her clothes. About a half hour before the wedding, she sat in the parlor with her bridesmaids to wait for the groom.<sup>2</sup> Then all of them went to the church together.-- (HRH)<sup>3</sup>

Most weddings were held in the Catholic church, because the Acadians were of the Catholic faith. There was always a procession to the church. The girl was not given away by her father as is the custom today. The boy picked up the girl, and their buggy was first in the procession. The bridesmaids were in the next buggies, and they were followed by the parents of the bride and groom. The relatives and friends followed next in their buggies.-- (PHH)

Any wedding of importance called for a long procession of buggies. The order of the procession, however, was not always the same. For example Post states: "As they left the bride's house, the bride and her father rode in the first buggy. The groom and his father rode in the second, and other relatives followed. Mothers usually did not attend those weddings: 'They are too sad.'"<sup>4</sup>

The Wedding Clothes

Wedding clothes and accessories, according to one informant, were not always in the same tradition. If the wedding was a big one, it was customary for the bride to wear a long white dress, a long veil, and a wreath

1 Lauren C. Post, Cajun Sketches from the Prairie of Southwest Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962) p. 148.

2 Arnold Van Gennepe, Manuel de Folklore Francais Contemporain (Paris: Editions A. et J. Picard, 1946), p. 388. According to Van Gennepe, it was also the custom in France to make many of the preparations the morning of the wedding.

3 Biographical information about the informants, identified by initials, appears at the end of this article.

4 Post, op. cit., p. 149.

around her head.<sup>5</sup> She carried a bouquet of artificial flowers.<sup>6</sup> The groom was dressed in a dark suit and wore black gloves.--(PHH)

Elisabeth Brandon's description coincides with the preceding one. As she states:

If the wedding is a "big wedding," the bride wears a long white dress, a veil and an orange blossom crown. The groom wears a dark suit--navy blue preferred. Black kid gloves and white socks are a "must" for the groom.<sup>7</sup>

Some of these Cajun elements are still observed in "country" weddings though since World War II customs have changed, and many of the older marriage traditions have disappeared.

### The Celebration After the Wedding

After the solemnity of the wedding ceremony an air of gaiety prevailed. Pauline Hebert related that

In Abbeville, after the wedding, the bride and groom and their attendants always went across the street from St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church to Corrodi's Studio<sup>8</sup> to have their wedding pictures made. Then there was a procession back to the bride's home.

There were long tables outside heaped with food. There were roast pigs, chickens, ducks, sausages, cakes, and a barrel of wine.

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5 A discussion of the symbolism of the wreath is found in "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," from the Anonymous Breux Manuscript as edited by Professor Jay K. Ditchy, selected, arranged, and translated by George F. Reinecke, Louisiana Folklore Miscellany, II (May 1966), p. 41: "An artificial wreath adorns the head of the timid virgin, who is led by her father or nearest relative. When the public see the crown, they either praise the bride for her purity conserved or make remarks about the symbol's impropriety when worn by a girl of dubious reputation."

6 Harnett T. Kane in The Bayous of Louisiana (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1943), p. 295, describes the bouquet as "a large bouquet of flowers, made of paper. It is the invariable custom; a bride who marched in with real blossoms . . . people would look at each other; that would be a big head sure. There are no florists in such places; garden flowers are often not available. At least they were unavailable in the old days; and so the practice has continued." There is another advantage to the paper flowers: "They would be put away as a souvenir of the occasion." (Ibid., p. 302) "The use of paper flowers made by a Cajun Lady . . . red and blue and yellow and purple" is also mentioned in Gumbo Ya-Ya: A Collection of Louisiana Folk Tales, compiled by Lyle Saxon, Edward Dreyer, and Robert Tallant (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1945), p. 185.

7 Elisabeth Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillion," le bayou (Spring 1956), 77. (Author's translation).

8 For many years Corrodi's Studio was a familiar landmark in Abbeville. With the passing of the family, however, the building was removed. The site is presently occupied by Frenzel Motors, agency for Plymouth and Chrysler.

Everybody brought a cake, and the size of the wedding was judged by the number of cakes.<sup>9</sup> A wedding where there were twenty-seven cakes, for instance, was talked about much more than one where there were only twelve. There was a lot of dancing and singing. At night there was a dance and there was celebrating until midnight.--(PHH)

Another informant recalled the gay procession back to the bride's home:

After the wedding there was a wild procession back home. Today they blow the horns of automobiles, but in Father's and Grandfather's day they had horse and buggy races on the way back to the bride's home. Some of the men along the way shot guns.<sup>10</sup> When they got back to the bride's home both families greeted each other, and there was a feast outside under the trees. The celebration usually lasted till midnight. Then the people went back home in their buggies. The ones that came from far away stayed with relatives.--(HRH)

### The Wedding Feast

The wedding feast following the marriage ceremony was one that was talked about long after the wedding. Many years ago this was the custom in Acadian country:

Having reached the bride's house, all are seated at tables made of long planks set up on stakes in the yard and covered with white tablecloths. The newlyweds are seated in the midst of their closest relatives. These, as well as the oldest guests, sit at the head of these rustic tables, or sometimes have a table of their own. They are waited on by the groomsmen.<sup>11</sup>

In the nineteen twenties marriage feasts were still popular, especially in rural areas. As an informant in Abbeville said:

The dinner tables were outside and they were set with roasted pigs, chickens, ducks, and cakes galore. They would never run out of food. They made lemonade, and there was some liquor, too. They made the lemonade in large galvanized tubs and used dippers with

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Kane, op. cit., p. 294: "There could not be too many; their concern was that one of the connoisseurs of weddings would look around and sniff. . . . 'Hm. . . . Not so many gateaux with the Gautreaux, ahn?' That would be a wrong start for a marriage."

<sup>10</sup> "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," p. 41. "Sometimes the youth along the route meet the cortege with guns, music and flowers." Post, op. cit., p. 149, also describes the procession: "The ceremony was followed by the exciting, helter-skelter ride back home. The newlyweds led off in a buggy drawn by the fastest horse available. The two fathers rode in the second buggy, which was also drawn by a fast horse. From there on, it was anybody's race."

<sup>11</sup> "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," p. 41.

long handles. Everybody drank out of the same dipper. When the bride and groom would arrive, everybody would say, "à Dieu les mariés." Everybody was happy and they sang songs and danced.--(LCL)

Another Abbeville informant remembered the wedding feast of the past:

We'd get under the trees, put big tables, and put all the food on that. They'd kill little pigs and cattle, you know, all that, and set that on the tables. Sometimes we'd be three and four hundred people get together under those big trees, and people, old, old folks, would set down and sing, play the violin, guitars, you know. And outside we'd be dancing, having a good time. And sometimes the old folks, old, old ones, you know, well, they'd drink a little bit too much, so mama and daddy would have to go put 'em to bed somewhere, you know, because they couldn't go no more. And then the young ones get sleepy. It was nice, you see. They wouldn't act crazy, but they was happy because they had drink a little drink, you know, maybe a little one too much, but it was nice.--(EMF)

The wedding celebration was usually held at the bride's home after the ceremony. If the bride's home was too small, the home of the groom's parents often served as the setting. Preparations for this feast were made days in advance, and on the day of the wedding the food was put upon the long tables that had been set up under the trees. Henry Saltzman of Gueydan described a wedding feast given in Meaux seventy-one years ago:

There was a wedding to take place, and four men gathered together to butcher hogs and turkeys a day before the wedding. There were eleven hogs and fourteen turkeys, which they butchered. The following day was the wedding. These four men worked there all day and part of that night and before the wedding.

I was twelve years old. I was coming along the highway on horseback going towards that way, because one of the men who was helping on the butchering I worked for. I knew he was there, so I was going out that way. And so the parade of the wedding passed me. But I followed them, and when I got to the home of Mr. Victor Broussard--that's where the wedding was taking place, that is--the ceremony and so forth was at Mr. Broussard's. When I got there, there was really a pasture and a yard full of buggies and saddle horses. The wedding company came in at that time. The breakfast was ready and set on tables outside the house. I guess the tables could have been maybe fifteen feet long. They started eating when they came in. The company of the wedding ate first, and then everybody else around there went to eating. These ladies from the two homes, the Broussard's and the David's, had cooked and prepared the meals, and so forth, and made cakes through the night. They cooked the meatballs and slices of meat in one of the big soap pots, and so when the people went to eating they were already with that. They also had for the wedding a barrel of fifty-five gallons of wine there, and of course after the eating of the breakfast they stayed there until it was time for the dinner meal. And while they were there, there were people around there singing for the wedding and they spoke

French. And of course they got up and went somewhere else around, walking.

Just southeast of the house there was another table as big as the other one. There were eleven wedding cakes on the table and pies and different things. At one or two o'clock, well, they started cutting and eating that cake. They had eaten all they wanted at the other table.

And this lasted until rather late in the evening, and anybody who wanted wine just could get it, somebody'd serve it to them, and there was no harm done among the people and nobody seemed to be intoxicated. This cake here was cut and everybody ate and had a very nice time. Now that kept on going until very near five o'clock that evening.

The dance--the wedding dance--was at a man by the name of Mr. Broussard north and east of this particular home. And I got on my pony and went with them, too. There was no trouble around. I just saw one man I thought maybe had had a drink or two too much, but everything was quiet. And the number of people there, well, it was hard to figure that because there were plenty people from all around the country. Now these people, the two people that got married, Mr. Broussard and Miss David, they were reared just a public road pretty much between them, and they got married. And he made his home on his father's land right close there.--(HS)<sup>12</sup>

### "La Chanson de Mariage"

It was the general custom in days gone by for one of the young women-friends of the bride to come forward at dessert. When the tables were loaded with pastry, tarts, and cakes, she would sing for the bride the "romance" or "complaints" which follows, set to a melancholy tune. In it she bemoaned in the name of the bride the loss of sweet liberty beneath her father's roof and especially the forfeiting of her virginity, "la noble qualite de fille," which she had prized so much.

Adieu, fleur de jeunesse!  
Il faut enfin t'abandonner;  
La noble qualite de fille  
Me faut aujourd'hui la quitter. . . .

Farewell, flower of youth  
At last I must leave you;  
The noble calling of maidenhood,  
Today I must quit it. . . .<sup>13</sup>

Harry Oster has included in A Sampler of Louisiana Folksongs a similar song, entitled "La Chanson de Mariage."

<sup>12</sup> Post, op. cit., p. 149, gives a description of a wedding feast obtained from Edna Mac Arceneaux who gathered the information for the author in 1936 while she was still a pupil at Rayne High School.

<sup>13</sup> "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," pp. 42-43.

It used to be customary, though now rare, for the bride to sing a sad lament at her wedding, bemoaning the necessity of leaving her beloved parents and family, and her carefree maidenhood in order to take on the heavy responsibilities of marriage.

J'avais juré dan ma jeunesse  
C'est de jamais me marrillier.  
Voir aujourd'hui il faut quitter,  
De l'avantage de nos parents.

Quantre je voir ces filles à table,  
Ils sont assis auprès de moi,  
Je les aime, je les adore,  
Voir aujourd'hui faut les laisser. . . .

I had sworn in my youth that I would  
never marry.  
See today it is necessary to leave  
the benefits of our parents.

When I see these girls at the table,  
They are seated in front of me,  
I love them, I adore them,  
See today, I must leave them. . . .<sup>14</sup>

Some of the writer's informants knew about songs that were sung for the bride, but only one could recall a song similar to the ones quoted above. Here is her version:

Adieu, la belle, adieu, la belle,  
Vous êtes t'eine fille,  
Vous êtes le corps eine femme:  
Adieu, la belle, aujourd'hui vous êtes  
Eine femme, la femme  
De votre jeune gamin. . . .

Good-bye dear girl; good-bye, dear girl;  
You're not a girl anymore;  
You are a woman;  
You are the woman of the boy (bridegroom)  
you married. . . . (EMF)

The informant, who had learned this song from her mother and her grandmother, did not remember the other verses.

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<sup>14</sup> "A Sampler of Louisiana Folksongs," collected 1956-57 and edited by Harry Oster. This record was released by the Louisiana Folklore Society.

"Bal de noce"

The "bal de noce," or wedding dance, followed the marriage feast, and although the newlyweds had departed by midnight the dancing continued until morning. In some instances, Brandon states, a wedding ball lasted as long as a day and two nights, beginning with the wedding party taking part in a series of seven dances: a waltz, a two-step waltz, a polka, a mazurka, a "jig-a-line," a glide, and "lanciers," with a promenade after each dance.<sup>15</sup> An informant from Meaux gave this description:

The wedding dance was held in a public dance hall. The owners of the dance halls would bid for the wedding dance because it brought a big crowd and they spent a lot of money.<sup>16</sup> At the dance they played French music on the accordion. My father played the accordion and sang for many of these dances. The dance started with "La Marche de la Noce," or the wedding march. Just the bride and groom and their attendants took part in the march. Next there was a waltz, and only the bride and groom danced. A popular waltz was "La Valse de Grande Chemin" (The Waltz of the Big Road). Then there was a two-step, danced only by the members of the wedding party. Then there was another waltz, and all the guests who wanted to could dance. "Allons a Lafayette," was another popular song at the dances.<sup>17</sup> There was a promenade between each dance. The dance lasted from about nine o'clock until midnight. The bride and groom left, but the dancing continued until the next morning.--(HRH)

Edith A. Benoit said that her wedding dance had been held at Gamble, a community between Gueydan and Kaplan, at Landry's dance hall. The owner gave her husband five dollars to have the dance there. They left early, however, to go to the house of her husband's godmother who lent them her home for the night. The next morning they went to second Mass.--(EAB)

Another informant recalled the dance after the wedding of one of her brothers:

Well, that night it was about six o'clock. We would get all together, and you know the first dance hall where the wedding would be, the first dance hall could come, well, that's where all the people'd go. And they have so many people half of the time all the

<sup>15</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 80.

<sup>16</sup> Post, op. cit., p. 156: "A wedding dance was the bal de noce. That was a special attraction, and it was to the advantage of the operator of the fais dodo to have the bal de noce of a popular couple at his hall. Some couples pointed with pride to the fact that they had been paid to have their wedding dance at a certain dance hall."

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 160. Joe Falcon of Rayne, a famous singer and accordion player, recorded "Allons a Lafayette," ("Let's Go to Lafayette") about 1926. The first of the three versions included in Irene Therese Whitfield's Louisiana French Folksongs. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1939), pp. 110-111, was the popular version.

people couldn't get in there, you know, friends, especially close friends. They'd go down there and, oh my Lord, especially, you know, we was living in Cossinade, in Kaplan back down there; and I had one of my uncles, Mr. Simeon Breaux, well, he had a big great dance hall there in Cossinade, and we used to go down there and that's where almost all the dance was.

I had one of my brothers got married, and they had four couples got married that night.<sup>18</sup> I was two years old when they got married. And, oh Lord, it last until six o'clock the next morning, from eight that evening six in the morning, that dance, the cakes, and the people. There was so much people it broke some what you call under the hall, they had so many people in that dance hall. . . . That was a hall. It was not a little bitty thing. When they talk about Simeon's dance hall, now that what was they call the biggest dance hall they had around in those days, and that's where all the people use to like to go there.--(EMF)

The same informant described the way the dance started:

Well, it is a march the first of all, the wedding march, and then the couple would come in or how many couple they had, whatever it is. And then they would play that march, you know, and only the girl and boy that was getting married, they'd go around the hall marching slow, slow as the dance goes. For about six or seven rounds they'd go around, and that dance it was so pretty. It was a band, not accordion and stuff. It was a band. They'd go around and around six or seven times, and then after that they all would clap to that band, and then they'd bring a big cake right in the middle of the hall, and then they'd make the girl and the boy cut the cake, the first piece of cake, you know? And they each would take a bite. They cross the hands like this, and they each take a bite of the cake, you know. . . . Then they'll take the cake and they go put it on the counter, and then they dance and they dance and they dance certain hours to it.

All ready they had a big table--they had a big kitchen on the side. They had a big table they serve the gumbo and the cake and whatever they wanted to eat, you know. The couple would go and sit first, and all the old folks would gather round the table and they'd clap their hands and they'd sing those old time songs, old, old, old, old time songs get together. Then after that everybody would get around the table and say a little speech, you know, for the bride and the groom, and how many children they had to have, how hard it was to make a living. They didn't know but they was gonna learn, you see? . . . Then about five or six the next morning everybody'd get together and go home.--(EMF)

David Roy, an informant who lives in the Duson community near Lafayette, played the accordion in his French band for forty-two years

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 292: "Double weddings are common. . . . Triple weddings are not unknown, as a result sometimes of the adroit persuasion of friends who feel that such a thing is joli."

until his retirement this year. He used his present accordion, one that was assembled by hand by John E. Hebert of Lafayette, to illustrate the procedure for "Playing the wedding dance."

His first selection was "La Marche de la Noce," to which the newlyweds and their attendants marched around the dance floor several times. When asked about the words of the song, he gave this approximate translation: "Well, you take me like I offered and you promised me to make your life with me and look what you been doing with me today." Next he played a waltz, which he said was danced by only the bride and the groom. This he illustrated by playing the popular "Jolie Blonde."<sup>19</sup> The two-step following the waltz was danced by the newly married and their attendants. He recalled a lively two-step, the translation of which went like this: "We went to the dance last night and the night before, and if nothing happens we'll go back to the dance tonight." He played several other selections that he had often played both at wedding dances and other dances "Let the Bon Temps Roule," "The Hathaway Two-Step," and "Hey, Madeleine." His last selection was "Home Sweet Home," which was traditional at the end of a dance.--(DR)

### The Honeymoon

The newlyweds always left the dance early, before midnight, but they did not go away on a honeymoon as is customarily done today.<sup>20</sup> According to Pauline Hebert:

Sometimes a relative, an aunt or an uncle, left their home to them for the night. Then the couple went to live with the bride's or the groom's parents. If the groom was fortunate enough to have his own little home on the farm, they spent the honeymoon there.--(PHH)

Another informant said also that the couple did not go away on a honeymoon as newlyweds do today. They went to a little home built somewhere on the farm close by.--(LCL)

Brandon says that in town the young couple leave ordinarily for a day or two, but in the country the wedding trip is not the fashion:

The young couple spend the first night in the home of their parents or at a neighbor's where there is plenty of room. Very often an older brother or sister lends them their home. The next day they begin their housekeeping in their own home.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Whitfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>20</sup> "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," *op. cit.*, p. 43. "At evening, when the meal and the songs are coming to an end, the couple steal away silently and go to a neighboring house, where their bed is prepared."

<sup>21</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 79 (Author's translations).

The Charivari

Another form of marriage celebrations was the charivari. A marriage might be celebrated in this way, Saxon says, "if the couple were well liked in the community, for the charivari is an expression of affection and approval."<sup>22</sup> According to Post, "Any widow, widower, or even old bachelor who got married in the old days in Cajun country inwardly expected to get a charivari--that is, unless he, or she, was a social outcast."<sup>23</sup> Dorson describes the custom this way:

The charivari, or shivaree, is a noisy celebration given an old widower who marries a pretty young girl. A crowd, loaded down with horns, bells, pots and pans, will gather in front of the couple's home and din away until the husband invites them all in for a drink. If he does not respond, the noise is kept up all night. So the person who remarries lays in a stock of liquor for such an occasion.<sup>24</sup>

Another writer of an earlier time gives this description of the charivari:

When two people of disparate age marry and when a widow marries a bachelor or a widower a single girl, as well as when spouses of appropriate ages fail to provide the expected entertainment at their wedding, there gathers at evening a crowd furnished with skillets, kettles and other pans of brass or copper. They beat on these with shovels or tongs and go tumultuously to the house of the couple. Increasing their noise, they dance before the house shouting, "charivari, charivari!"

To bring the noise to an end, the couple must offer a collation as well as the promise of a ball. If a widow marries a widower they are exempt from this burlesque serenade.<sup>25</sup>

Brandon states that the custom still exists in Vermilion Parish even though many people have never "heard speak" of it.

In Vermilion Parish a charivari is given: "if December marries May"--if an old man marries a young girl or vice versa; if a widower or a widow remarries, but not a widower married a widow; if the two parties had been separated and go back together again. This last case is the most frequent case."<sup>26</sup>

Here is a description of a charivari given by an informant from Abbeville:

<sup>22</sup> Gumbo Ya-Ya, p. 185.

<sup>23</sup> Post, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Dorson, Buying the Wind (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 243.

<sup>25</sup> "Early Louisiana French Life and Folklore," p. 35. See also Van Gennep, op. cit., p. 614.

<sup>26</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillion," p. 80 (Author's Translation).

There was a lot of this at Forked Island in the twenties and thirties. They were more for a grass widow or a widower who married someone who had never been married or for someone who separated and took back. The people knocked on buckets, tubs, pans, and skillets with spoons and knives and beat on anything that would make a lot of noise. I know of a charivari that took place in Abbeville about ten years ago for one of my pupil's parents who had separated and come back together. We don't have them very often today.--(LCL)

Hazel Hebert described a charivari for an uncle and aunt, ages 68 and 64, who remarried six years ago:

It was about eleven o'clock at night. I was sick and in bed, but the noise woke me. The people gathered and beat on buckets and pans. They tied long strings to the house and held the other end and rubbed it with rosin to make noise. The noise kept up until the couple came out and promised to serve the people gumbo and rice. After the people were served they left the couple alone.--(HRH)

Elnedia Fermental spoke of the charivari with approval:

Well, you see, when a man and a woman get married, a boy and a girl get married, and they stay four or five years together, okay, and they separate, sometimes they separate, you see, and they'd see for a while that they didn't do right and they don't get along, you know, so they get married again. . . . So that night a bunch of men and women get together with pans and buckets, you know? And they come there and they bring, oh, the biggest noise around there.

Now if the people get out and receive them with cakes or stuff, ice cream or lemonade, okay, then, they got to be--it's through, there. They mustn't come back again! But if they don't, they put the door closed and they don't receive the people, they do so much noise there, and the next night they can come again and make as much noise. You see? That was a great thing in those days. They'd get a bunch of 'em with guns shoot up in the air, you know, and bands, and noise. They couldn't sleep half of the night, the one that had took back together, you see. So as long as they didn't receive them with lemonade or something, well, they'd keep on coming every night. . . and that was the law. As long as they didn't receive them . . . that's go on for two or three months. Can't never tell.

You see, that was nice. And another way it'd keep a man and a woman from separate because it's a lot of man and woman don't like all that noise. They ashame whenever they do a thing like that, and now they got to come and receive the people that make that noise, you see? Because they ashame to see that they had separate and then all their friends come in and they tease them about it.

When she was asked whether the charivari is still the custom, she added:

Well, out in the country. It's not often you see that, because I guess the people's more civilized in one way. They just let the people go to their business, you know. But a lot of 'em kind of

want to make a little menace to somebody if they get married and get together again. They come there and tease them, you know, to not let go again and separate. I think it's a great thing. It's more of a shame that a way, you see, with the couples, you see. Oh, Lord, I wouldn't like for that to happen to me for the world! -- (EMF)

### Volé le charivari

The custom known as "volé le charivari" was an interesting aspect of the charivari of many years ago. A widower or a widow could avoid the noisy serenade by allowing the priest to "steal" the charivari. This was prearranged with the priest simply by making a donation to the church. Then after the wedding ceremony the priest rang a little bell,<sup>27</sup> and everyone know that this meant there must be no charivari. It is not know whether this custom still prevails.-- (EAB)<sup>27</sup>

### Jumping the broomstick

Another marriage custom, "sauter le manche de balai," or "jumping the broomstick," is known in Acadiana, although it is heard of less frequently now. According to Kane:

Jumping over the broomstick is another way in which a man and a woman have inaugurated an informal connection. The two stand together; "witnesses" hold the stick a foot or so above the floor, and the pair hop over together. In one case, dating back some years, an English-speaking neighbor was invited to such a ceremony; one man, directing it, went through a kind of service in which he asked the partners whether they were willing to stay with each other. There followed cakes, drinks, and kissing of the bride.<sup>28</sup>

Saxon describes this marriage ceremony as a Negro custom at Ponchartroula, where "unofficial marriages, with only the ceremony of jumping over the broomstick, were often practiced."<sup>29</sup> Brandon, however, states:

The custom . . . is known in all of Lower-Louisiana. In olden times when the priests were far away and there was no means of transportation for those who lived in the marshes or "on the cheniers" the young couple, who wanted to be married and did not want to wait until they could see a priest, could "jump the broomstick." In the presence of friends, the young couple put a broom on the floor; they held hands and jumped over the broom together. This "marriage" was

<sup>27</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 81: ". . . a widow or a widower could avoid the charivari by their making a donation to the church. Then the priest or the altar boys 'sonnait le charivari' (rang the charivari): one of them went in front of the house of the newlyweds and rang a bell which warned the friends and the neighbors." (Author's translations)

<sup>28</sup> Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 304,

<sup>29</sup> Gumbo *Ya-Ya*, p. 569.

accepted by all the people provided they were married officially later by the priest.<sup>30</sup>

Lelia Labauve told this story of the custom:

When I taught school at Forked Island in 1928, my landlady told me about the marriage ceremony called "jumping the broomstick." When I began teaching I asked the pupils their names, but they did not know them. They only knew their nicknames. But my landlady, Mrs. "Noonoot" Broussard, knew all the children by their nicknames and could tell me their parents' names. The children were illegitimate, she said, and were not baptized. There was no priest at Forked Island, and the people lived far from a church. The way they married was to jump over a broomstick before three witnesses. I went to see the priest in Kaplan and asked him to come and teach catechism. He married the parents all in one group, and he baptized the children all together in the same group. I was godmother to these children. They were given names and their baptismal certificates. And then the bishop came to my classroom and confirmed the children. This was in the days of the corduroy roads in the marsh lands.--(LCL)

Hazel Hebert also had this to say about "jumping the broomstick:"

This was done when married people who could not get a divorce wanted to marry again, but they had no money or grounds for the divorce. Or sometimes this was done by some couples who lived too far away from a church. The couple gave a party or a supper and invited their friends, sometimes as many as six, to serve as witnesses. Two of the witnesses would hold the broom about six inches from the floor and the couple would jump over it. This was legal as a common law marriage, but the church did not recognize it as a holy marriage. A year and a day later the couple could have the marriage blessed by taking vows in the church.--(HRH)

Enedia Fermental felt that "jumping the broomstick" was not a proper marriage:<sup>31</sup>

Well, it was a boy and a girl who would get together. They wouldn't get married . . . no kind of way, and they'd get together and stay together, take care of their own business, you know. They wouldn't bother nobody; nobody wouldn't bother them. They'd raise a big family, they wouldn't get married, they wouldn't get a license. They wouldn't get married by the preacher, the priest, or the judge. They'd just stay together, raise a big family, and no license. So some said they was not married, which was the truth. Don't you think so? . . . But they love each other, and they didn't make no

<sup>30</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillion," p. 81 (Author's Translation)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 81. "Now that it is so easy to reach a priest, 'jumping the broomstick' means living in concubinage."

harm to nobody by staying together. And on the long run the children was well lookin' at, and on the long run the people, the man and the woman would be so nice, you know, that nobody had no grudge against them. The old folks would visit them, you know, but as long as the young ones was young they wouldn't let them visit because they said that they was goin' to teach them something and that they knew they was not married, to change their minds. "I'm not married," the girl and the boy's going to understand that. Well, they's say that one's not married; they can do the same thing, but it's not nice.--(EMF)

Beliefs and superstitions regarding  
courtship and marriage

1. An umbrella put on the bed will chase the boy away.--(HRH)<sup>32</sup>
2. If a broom sweeps your feet, you won't get married for a year.--(HRH)<sup>33</sup>
3. If you give the boy a knife or a necktie it will cut off your love.--(HRH)<sup>34</sup>
4. If it rains on the wedding day, this means tears in the life of the bride, or tears of the one who lost her.--(HRH)<sup>35</sup>
5. If a girl's petticoat shows, she's looking for a husband.--(PHH)<sup>36</sup>
6. If a girl is sewing and the thread knots, she will have trouble with her boy friend.--(PHH)<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Hilda Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions:" Journal of American Folklore, XL (April-June 1927), p. 176, item 685: "An umbrella on the bed drives the beaux away;" Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 175: "Un parasol sur le lit chasse les amoureux." Alcee Fortier, Louisiana Studies, (New Orleans: F.F. Hansell & Bro., 1894), p. 133: "To open an umbrella in the house chases away the lovers."

<sup>33</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 75: "Si tu balaies sur les pieds d'enne personne, cette personne va pas s'marier cette année, ou elk va marier un veuf ou une veuve;" Gumbo Ya-Ya: "Don't sweep under a girl's feet or she will never marry." P. 552. Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 173, item 575: "If someone sweeps under your feet, you will never be married."

<sup>34</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 75: "Si le futur donne un couteau à enne future, ça coupe leurs fiançailles;" Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 154, item 107: "If a man gives a girl a knife, it will cut their love."

<sup>35</sup> Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 158, item 178: "If it rains at all on your wedding day you are going to cry a lot during your married life;" Gumbo Ya-Ya, p. 549: "Rain or tears at a wedding are bad luck;" Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 77: "S'il pleut le jour des noces il y aura beaucoup de larmes dans la vie des conjoints."

<sup>36</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 75: "Si le jupon d'une fille pend, elle regarde pour (cherche) un mari."

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillon," p. 75: "Si ton fil noue quand t'es après coud'e tu vas avoir des tracas dan tes amours;" Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 157, item 151: "If a girl is sewing and the thread keeps knotting, it is because her beaux is thinking about her."

7. When a single girl puts a piece of wedding cake under her pillow, she dreams of the man she will marry.--(PHH)

After she married, the bridesmaids would take a piece of the cake and put it under their pillow and the boy they'd dream that night that's the one they was gonna get married.--(EMF)<sup>38</sup>

8. Dream of a death and you'll be invited to a wedding.--(PHH)<sup>39</sup>

9. Dream of a wedding and you'll attend a funeral.--(PHH)<sup>40</sup>

10. Don't sweep towards the road or you'll sweep the young man's love away.--(PHH)<sup>41</sup>

If you had a boy coming to a girl's house and sweep right after he leaves, sweep out of the house, it would sweep all his love with him. As he leaves, the girl would sweep the love with him.--(EMF)

11. You never got married unless the moon was full. This brought bad luck.--(HRH)

12. If you are a young woman, you do not wear another woman's wedding ring until she has been married a year. This would bring bad luck.--(HRH)

13. If you looked into a well at twelve o'clock noon and you saw the profile of a person this meant you'd marry that person.--(RC)

14. If you looked into a well and you saw a coffin with lit candles this meant you'd die before your wedding day.--(RC)

The informant's mother, now deceased, told him this story: This young lady around Meaux, a Miss Trahan, was engaged to be married and looked into the well at noontime. She saw a coffin with the candles lit and died before her wedding day.

15. If a boy and a girl was going out together and a boy would come in and close the door, come in backwards into the house, well that was thirty days after the boy didn't come back home, didn't come there no more.--(EMF)

16. Some people believed that, they wouldn't do it for the world, like sweep on somebody's feet because they say it keep them from getting married.--(EMF)

17. Whenever they were getting the bride's trousseau together . . . they would make quilts . . . old people would get together and make quilts. And after they was through with the quilt they'd get a cat and put the boy on one side and the girl on one side, and they'd get the cat and throw it in the quilt, and they'll raise the quilt up like this and they'll let it go just down, you know, up and down, up and down like this. And on the side the cat would jump that would be the boss in the family. If it was on the side of the boy, the boy would be the boss. If it'd be on the side of the girl the girl would be boss.--(EMF)

<sup>38</sup> Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillion," p. 75: "Si tu mets un morceau d'gâteau d'mariage en bas ton oreiller tu vas rêver au garçon tu vas marier."

<sup>39</sup> Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 181, item 827: "To dream of death is a sign of a wedding;" Brandon, "La Paroisse de Vermillion," p. 75: "Si tu rêve à une mortalité, tu vas être invité pour ein noce." Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 137. "To dream of death is the sign of marriage; to dream of marriage is the sign of death," p. 13

<sup>40</sup> Roberts, "Louisiana Superstitions," p. 181, item 828: "To dream of a wedding is a sign of death."

<sup>41</sup> If you had a boy coming to a girl's house and sweep right after he leaves, sweep out of the house, it would sweep all his love with him. As he leaves, the girls would sweep the love with him.--EMF No examples of this nor of the following beliefs could be found in printed documentary sources.

Acadiana today

Time has wrought many changes in the courtship and marriage traditions of the Acadians of Southwest Louisiana. During World War II mass induction of young men into military service gave the young men of Acadiana a first-hand acquaintance with modes of living in other parts of the world. More recently improved means of transportation, compulsory education of youth until the age of sixteen, and education via mass media, especially television, have made young people of Acadiana more sophisticated than were their predecessors. Hence, through acculturation of this segment of the population, many of the traditional elements of Acadian culture are only retained in the memories of the older generation and are practiced only in families in remote rural areas which have not been so amenable to change.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE INFORMANTS

- (EAB) Edith Aube Benoit (Mrs. Nicholas Benoit)--Age 73. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Benoit has no formal education and speaks mostly French. A life-long resident of Vermilion Parish, she resides in Gueydan, Louisiana. Mr. Benoit is deceased.
- (RC) Reed Clostio--Age 40. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Clostio has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. A resident of Kaplan, Louisiana, he is a public school teacher.
- (EMF) Enedia Meaux Fermental (Mrs. Oneal Fermental)--Age 57. White. Father was French-Acadian. Maternal grandmother, Spanish. Maternal grandfather, Choctaw Indian. Catholic. Mrs. Fermental has three years of elementary schooling. A resident of Abbeville, Louisiana, she combines homemaking with part-time baby-sitting. Mr. Fermental is deceased.
- (HRH) Hazel Roy Hebert (Mrs. Daniel Hebert)--Age 35. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Hebert has a high school education. She lives on the family farm in the Meaux community between Abbeville and Kaplan. Her husband is a teacher at the Meaux High School.
- (PHH) Pauline Hubert Hebert (Mrs. Gaston Hebert)--Age 68. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Hebert, a retired public school teacher, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She taught at the Meaux High School until her retirement in 1965. Her paternal grandparents were from France, and her mother was of Acadian descent. Mrs. Hebert lives on her farm in the Meaux community. Mr. Hebert is deceased.
- (LCL) Lelia Comeaux Labauve (Mrs. Courtney Labauve)--Age 62. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mrs. Labauve is a retired public school teacher. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in education. She taught in the elementary grades in Forked Island and in Abbeville until her retirement in 1966. She presently teaches first grade

and religion classes at Mount Carmel, a Catholic parochial school in Abbeville. She resides in Abbeville.

- (DR) David Roy--Age 59. White. French-Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Roy attended the third grade, but his education is somewhat limited. He has played the French accordian since the age of twelve, although his daughter, Mrs. Daniel Hebert, says he really started to play the instrument when he was five years old. He began to play for public dances when he was fifteen and played in a Cajun band for forty-two years. He has played for many wedding dances but retired this year. A house painter, he lives in rural Duson, southwest of Lafayette.
- (HS) Henry Saltzman--Age 83. White. German Acadian. Catholic. Mr. Saltzman is self-educated. A lifelong resident of Vermilion Parish, he is a pioneer citizen of Gueydan, Louisiana, where he makes his home. He is a retired barber.



Last Will of Madame Jonathan Darby  
Translated by Sidney L. Villercé  
New Orleans, La.

LAST WILL AND  
TESTAMENT OF

TODAY, the twenty-fifth day of April  
one thousand eight hundred and five,  
and in the twenty-ninth year of  
American Independence. . . . .

WIDOW MARIE CORBIN  
BACHEMIN, MADAME  
JONATHAN DARBY.

We, Narcissus Broutin, a Notary Public of the United  
States, in the City of New Orleans, at the request of  
DEMOISELLE MARIE CORBIN BACHEMIN, WIDOW of the SIEUR  
JONATHAN DARBY, were conveyed to her abode in this  
City, finding her healthy, both in mind and spirit,  
of sound memory and discernment. She advised us that  
fearing the uncertainty of imminent death that

April 25, 1805  
Narcissus Broutin,  
Notary, New Orleans.

visits all creatures, realizing that hers must one day happen, she there-  
fore elected to put her personal affairs in good order and therefore to  
dictate the following testament. . . . .

First, she duly declared to be a Catholic of the Apostolic and Roman  
faith, a native of Brittany, legitimate daughter of the SIEUR CORBIN  
BACHEMIN, and DEMOISELLE MARIE HARDY, both deceased . . . . .

And she hereby declared to have been married in the rituals of Our Holy  
Mother the Church, to the SIEUR JONATHAN DARBY, from whom she had four  
children named JEANNE DARBY, WIDOW of the SIEUR JEAN DE LAVILLEBEUVRE,  
Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of His Catholic Majesty; PIERRE DARBY,  
deceased without issue; LOUIS DARBY DAMICANT; and JEAN-BAPTISTE ST. MARC  
DARBY, deceased leaving four children as follows, JEAN age about twenty-  
four years, CELESTE, about 21 years, ST. MARC, about nineteen years, and  
URSIN, about seven years. These, he had in legitimate marriage with  
DEMOISELLE FRANCOISE PELLERIN . . . . .

She further declared that her properties consist in a cattle ranch at the  
Attakapas, and a negro named Jean, age about sixty years, and thirty  
arpents of land on each side of the Bayou Teche at the Attakapas . . .  
She further declared having another cattle ranch and additional lands  
situated at the Attakapas Post, as well as a negro named Henry, age  
about fifty years, having acquired this estate from her brother, PIERRE  
DARBY, as a privileged heir by law homologated by the Superior Council  
of this city with the understanding that the negro named Henry, was  
to be set free after her death, following the wishes expressed in the  
testament of the said PIERRE DARBY, her brother, drawn up in the office  
of this notary in the year eighteen thousand and three . . . . .

She further declares to bequeath the negro named Jean to her daughter,  
DEMOISELLE JEANNE DARBY so that he may serve her until her death and  
then be set free. . .

And in grateful recognition of the service she has received from her  
daughter, JEANNE DARBY, WIDOW DE LAVILLEBEUVRE, with whom she resided  
and who, during this time, gave her shelter, food, and clothing, and in  
recognition of her good qualities, she gives and bequeaths to the said

DAME WIDOW DE LAVILLEBEUVRE her daughter, a third in all her property, as well as one fifth of the two other third remaining, so that she may enjoy or dispose in her said right after the death of her mother. . . .

She further declares that she names as her Testamentary Executor, first the SIEUR EDOUARD FORSTALL, and, as an alternate, the SIEUR JEAN DE LAVILLEBEUVRE, her grandson, in order that her wishes be carried out, as ordained and disposed in the estimate to the said inventory and partition to be shared among her heirs without litigation. In this, she agrees to give to her Testamentary Executors all the time necessary in order to carry out her wishes.

And as to the remainder of her property, she further stipulates that this be divided in three equal shares: one share for DEMOISELLE JEANNE DARBY, WIDOW DE LAVILLEBEUVRE, the other to the SIEUR LOUIS DARBY DAMICANT, and the last to the four children of the late JEAN-BAPTISTE ST. MARC DARBY, in order that they may inherit it after her death with the benediction of OUR LORD and her own, in accordance with her wishes.

She further declared, that because of the condition of her son, LOUIS DARBY DAMICANT, which makes him incapable of looking after his affairs because of the weakness of his organs and his mind, her Testamentary Executor shall leave to her daughter, JEANNE DARBY, WIDOW DE LAVILLEBEUVRE, his portion of his inheritance to be administered as long as it shall please the ALMIGHTY to have him live; and, should he get well, she is to render a full account of his share.

After reading and rereading the above testament, she declared that it contained her last will and testament, she hereby signed in the presence of the SIEURS MICHEL WALSCH, JEAN MORGAN, JR., FRANCOIS ALPUENTE, undersigned witnesses domiciled in this city. . . .

In faith I hereby affixed my signature, this day and year as per above.

Signed

JEAN MORGAN

DARBY

MICHEL WALSCH

FRANCOIS ALPUENTE

NARCISSUS BROUTIN  
(Notary Public)

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA  
 BAPTISM INDEX - 1822-1835 (A and B)  
 Elaine D. Thayer  
 New Orleans, Louisiana  
 Vita B. and John R. Reaux  
 Lafayette, Louisiana

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
ABSHEAR, Adrien	95	32
Azelia	303	34
Benjamin	149	28
Carmigille	98	32
Edouard	127	25
Haverd	324	34
Jacob	298	34
Jean	75	25
Jean	522	35
Joseph	75	25
Joseph	347	27
Lufrok	?	23
Lucie Lucendi	151	28
Lucienne	74	31
Marguerite	131	31
Marguerite	236	34
Marie Arthemise	185	28
Onezime	240	34
Ozenne	148	28
Rachel	303	34
Rosalie	113	33
Terzile	97	32
Ulysse	305	34
ACHER, Hellene	575	35
ADAMS, Abraham	246	26
Adam	97	32
Celeste	100	32
David	140	25
Maime	138	25
Marie	137	25
Marie Lidonia	196	32
Melanie	200	28
Morguein	110	25
Vane	139	25
AGALY, Caroline	77	25
ALFRED, Joseph	248	29
ALOUET-HOLLOWAY, Marie Eugenie	254	34
ANDRIS, Benjamin	144	25
Celeste	115	31
Melanie	145	25
Suzane	146	25
ANTONIO, Marie Caroline	?	22
ARCENEAU, Alexandre Savigny	13	32
Anastasie	95	31
Andre Dutival	146	30

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
ARCENEAU, Clara	12	24
Cyprien Maismain	137	33
Dema	542	35
Erasie	15	32
Francois	71	24
Francois	419	35
Hypolite Nicholas	449	35
Jean Pierre	?	22
Joseph Romer	119	31
Laure	97	31
Louise	?	23
Louis Joseph	238	29
Louis Lucien	322	27
Marguerite Josephine	16	32
Marie Odite	?	22
Marie Amelia	519	35
Marie Brigitte	102	28
Marie Coraide	106	33
Marie Emilie	281	26
Marie Josephine	195	28
Marie Josette	3	32
Marie S.	161	33
Pierre	55	32
Pierre Emile	100	25
ARGRE, Ursin	227	26
ARPIN, Adele	171	26
Adelina	54	27
Aladin	118	32
Arthemise	294	30
Valsin	400	34
BABINEAU, Amelia	255	30
Azelie	28	27
Belizaire	383	30
Celeste	75	32
Marguerite	243	29
Marie	52	27
Marie	?	23
Marie Rose	106	25
Marie Thenaise	142	33
Valmont	484	35
BALLEY, William Adolph	38	32
BACKER, Clementine	52	32
Joseph	208	29
BARET, Adelaide	177	26
Benjamin	113	25
Marie Belzire	178	26
Marie Louise	186	28
BAUDIN, Orelia	281	30
Belizaire	108	25
Hypolite	158	33
Josephine	133	28
Marie Belzire	333	27

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
BEAUDOIN, Alexis	564	35
Amelia	217	29
Amelie	216	29
Anastasie	113	28
Beloni	225	23
Belzire	31	26
Cidalise	262	27
Clemile	349	34
Emile	135	27
Ernestine	218	31
Eugene	244	29
Evariste	143	34
Evariste	285	31
Lerima	311	34
Marselienne	?	30
Terzile	312	30
Ursin	9	24
Zemire	100	28
BEGNEAU, Adolphe	178	28
Ema	49	32
Louis Joseph	476	35
Marcel	5	27
Stanislas	366	30
BELL, Adelaide	399	34
John	581	35
BENOIT, Adeline	381	30
Andre	302	30
Celeste	?	24
Cidalise	413	35
Eloi	406	35
Estelle	91	25
Eugenie	111	32
Eugenie	133	25
Hypolite	211	26
Jean	240	26
Lessin	494	35
Lucien	139	31
Marguerite	?	22
Marguerite Cleonise	?	23
Marie	23	32
Marie Azelie	?	23
Marie Eugenie	25	32
Michel	386	34
Oliva	126	31
Placide	201	28
Rosemond	?	23
Theodule	41	25
Valsin	61	31
Valsin	357	30
BENTON, Jean August	101	32
BERAULD, Desire	354	27
BERGERON, Edmond	320	34
Emilie	43	35
Joseph	110	33
Octave	343	34

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
BERNARD, Anastasie	?	23
Anatole	127	28
Anazia	266	34
Arvillen	259	30
Aspasie	163	28
Bonne	?	23
Celima	121	33
Clara	488	35
Clemence	571	35
Clemence Arthemise	145	33
Denis	256	34
Eloi	471	35
Emelie	147	33
Emelien	248	26
Eulalie	319	34
Euphraise Elvina	175	26
Honore	237	29
Jean Clemile	559	35
Jean Demas	146	28
Jean Nelson	116	32
Josephine	96	25
Josephine	193	33
Josephine	31	25
Louis Duclide	?	23
Louis Dupreville	226	26
Marcelite	304	26
Marguerite Anastasie	18	32
Marie Odele	37	31
Marie Adeline	143	29
Marie Azelie	?	23
Marie Cidelise	162	33
Marie Emelia	269	34
Marie Estelle	27	25
Marie Irma	21	27
Marie Octavina	71	31
Marie Uranie	410	35
Marie Germaine	572	35
Melanie	2	27
Odile	?	23
Onezia	14	32
Opar	7	32
Pierre Arvillien	137	28
Theodore	?	23
Ursin	89	25
Zelia	421	35
BERTRAND, Devine	359	34
Marcelite	456	35
Vincent	331	27
BLACK, Caroline Jeanne	173	33
Daniel	125	33

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
BLANCHET, Alexie	74	27
Anastasie	444	35
Aspasie	112	33
Celima	88	32
Desire	383	30
Martin	480	35
Olivier	384	30
Sperat	391	30
Sylvere	111	33
Ursule	105	28
BODIN, Dolze	51	32
BONIN, Eugenie	?	24
BOUDREAU, Adeline	351	27
Anastasie	42	31
Aspasie	76	27
Athenaise	191	33
Azema	80	31
Azenaise	499	35
Belezaire	381	30
Belzire	281	34
Carmelite	317	30
Carmelite	204	29
Carmenezite	10	27
Caroline	318	30
Caroline	?	23
Caroline	71	27
Celeste	47	25
Charles Sosthene	366	34
Cidalise	44	31
Cidalise	97	28
Claire	382	30
Clezema Azema	80	31
Desire	32	31
Duclise	34	25
Dupreville	408	35
Edgar	367	34
Elizabeth	237	34
Emile	247	26
Emilia	112	32
Estelle	43	31
Euclide	153	29
Euclide	70	27
Euphemie	26	31
Felicia	242	34
Jean Leo	215	29
BOUDREAU, Jean Theogene	24	32
Josephine	40	32
Julie Adelaide	303	26
Leocadie	80	33
Lezima	34	32
Marcel	50	33
Marcelitte	325	30
Marguerite	437	35

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR (1800)</u>
BOUDREAU, Marguerite Amelia	101	25
Marie	?	23
Marie	130	28
Maximilienne	135	25
Meann	76	32
Melanie	?	23
Melanie	?	24
Natalie	81	32
Norbert	172	26
Oliva	66	33
Olive	11	31
Onezime	230	34
Onezime	275	34
Placide	380	30
Sevene	316	30
Seville	297	30
Suzane	337	27
Typhories	60	27
Theodule	328	34
Theasima	479	35
Ursin	59	27
Valerie	359	30
Zepherin	191	28
BOULET, Adelaide	6	27
Adele	?	22
Belizaire	159	26
Carmelite	226	29
Carmigile	115	32
Celestine	133	29
Ernestine	132	29
Jean	227	29
Louis	333	34
Melissaire	334	34
BOUQUET, Annonciade	46	27
BOURG, Aladin	46	32
Celeste	119	25
Cesaire	164	33
Euclide	149	31
Francois Husline	159	25
Joseph	413	30
Joseph Florentine	512	35
Marie Carmelite	36	25
Marie Emelia	50	31
Marie Sylvie	7	22
BOURGEOIS, Calide	232	34
Eulalie	212	26
Euphrasie	101	28
Marguerite	448	35
Marie	?	24
Zenon	132	25
BOURGES, Leonard	136	28
BOUTIN, Adrien	100	31
BOYER, Anne Nanette	150	28
BRADLEY, Sarah Ann	253	34

	Number	Year (1800)
BRASHEAR, James	85	32
John	172	33
Maria	362	34
Martin Desmarais	361	34
Neuvillie	360	34
BRASSEAU, Aladin	199	28
Alcide	82	33
Arthemise	?	23
Arthemise	86	25
Aurelia	47	31
Aureliene	246	29
Azeline	152	31
Elmire	80	28
Euclide	505	35
Joachin	354	30
Joseph	59	33
Joseph	7	27
Josephine	77	28
Marcelite	6	32
Marie	276	26
Marie Angele	?	22
Sylvanie	350	34
Tolcide	50	32
Victorine	58	33
BRAYER, Adelaide	8	31
Henry	7	31
BREAUX, Adolph	314	34
Aggerin	?	23
Anatalie	74	27
Augustavie	373	34
Aurelien	26	27
Catherine Emerante	100	33
Celestine	386	30
Celestine Olive	?	22
Deroxin	7	24
Edmond	398	31
Elmire	304	34
Esther	44	27
Francois Valmont	79	28
Gustave Arvillien	138	29
Hypolite	108	31
Jean Oscar	285	30
Joseph	219	26
Julie	152	25
Louise	131	33
Marguerite Oliva	123	31
Marie Anastasie	122	25
Marie Aspasia	185	26
Marie Emerida	43	32
Marie Laure	42	27
Marie Octavine	17	31
Octave	127	33

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year (1800)</u>
BREAUX, Pierre Este	202	34
Rosalie	425	35
Ursin	?	34
Valentine	96	28
Valerie	4	24
Valery	346	34
BROOS, Marie Emelaide	52	33
Elenor	393	30
BROUSSARD, Adelaide	52	25
Adelaide	?	24
Adelaide Ida	288	30
Adele	?	22
Adeline	30	25
Aime	286	30
Alexandre	231	34
Alexandre	?	23
Anastasie	25	27
Antoine	127	33
Arminezine	26	32
Arthemise	?	23
Aspasie	82	32
Apasie	?	24
Aurelia	156	23
Aurelia	175	28
Aurelia	66	27
Aurelin	174	28
Aurelien	378	34
Azelie	461	35
Belizaire	289	30
Belzire	253	30
Benjamin	163	26
Bruno	190	33
Camille	?	22
Camille	525	35
Camille	126	25
Carmelite	?	23
Carmelite	73	32
Caroline	335	27
Caroline	104	33
Celeate	334	27
Celestine	?	22
Celima	152	29
Cidalise	382	30
Clelia	306	34
Clemile	234	29
Cleonise	63	33
Clarisse	196	28
Delzane	51	31
Demas	584	35
Derozin	236	26

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year (1800)</u>
BROUSSARD, Desire	204	28
Desire	282	30
Desire	54	31
Desire	291	34
Desire	491	35
Duplaisin	385	34
Dupreville	388	30
Elina	248	34
Elizabeth	122	33
Elize	?	24
Elize	56	32
Elmire	78	33
Elodie	322	30
Eloi	137	33
Eloi	388	34
Eloi	55	31
Eloi	63	31
Emelia	198	28
Emile	184	26
Emile	87	25
Emile	199	28
Emilia	514	35
Emilia	392	34
Emilia	27	32
Emilia	200	29
Emilie	174	28
Emilton	312	34
Estival	486	35
Euclide	327	34
Euclide	91	33
Eugene	77	32
Eugene	11	32
Eugene	142	30
Eugenie	44	32
Euphemie	273	30
Ezilda	259	34
Flores	452	35
Francois	195	26
Hillaire	?	23
Hypolite	194	28
Jean	219	34
Jean	308	26
Jean	194	26
Jean Klebert	?	23
Jean Sosthene	275	30
Joseph	466	35
Joseph	78	25
Josephine	103	25
Josephine	422	35
Josephine	?	22
Jules	87	32
Lafayette Melanie	193	26

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year (1800)</u>
BROUSSARD, Lambert	?	22
Lastie	258	34
Laure	252	26
Leo	8	27
Leon	3	31
Leon	?	22
Leonsrd	117	32
Lessin	207	28
Lessin	105	33
Lize	301	26
Louis Dupleissis	168	33
Louis Dupreville	89	31
Louis Hebert	7	23
Lucien	334	30
Marcel	433	35
Marcelienne	208	28
Mersilienne	261	34
Marguerite	245	29
Marguerite	116	33
Marie	368	30
Marie Alma	403	30
Marie Alzer	91	28
Marie Aurelie	151	31
Marie Lenore	546	35
Marie Natalie	38	27
Marie Olivs	116	25
Marie Remise	84	28
Marie Euranie	?	22
Meanie	64	33
Melsnie	41	31
Melsnie	122	29
Moise	57	31
Napoleon	45	35
Meance	20	32
Neuville	387	30
Nicolas	136	31
Norbert	92	25
Norbert Desire	123	25
Numa	33	68
Olidon	385	30
Olivier	164	26
Onezime	364	30
Orizs	241	34
Ozea	143	33
Phelonise	222	34
Prosper	115	33
Sevenes	136	25
Sosthene	307	34
Sosthene	397	30
Sosthene	640	30
Suzanne	67	27
Sylvanie	282	34
Syphroien	280	30
Theodule	205	34
Theogene	56	27
Treville	467	35

	Number	Year (1800)
BROUSSARD, Uranie	300	26
Uranie	31	31
Uranie	102	32
Valerien	19	32
Valerien	203	34
Valsin	154	25
Victoria	6	36
Victor Cadet	453	35
Zelmire	33	27
Zulma	129	29
Zulma	313	30
Zulma	287	30
Zulmee	130	29
Zelmire	69	27
BRUSSET, Elizabeth	131	29
BRUCE, Robert James	174	26

# BLANPAIN, TRADER AMONG THE ATTAKAPAS

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The shipwrecked seamen from La Superbe had found the human nature of the Attakapas Indians more genial than nature in general. At least one of the refugees had chosen to remain with the Attakapas rather than return to his countrymen, and this with no indication that he felt any obligation to provide the natives personally with a good meal. Either the earlier reputation of these Indians had been undeservedly bad or their man-eating habits were no longer apparent. Since the 1720's land-based adventurers and traders had been penetrating the area with apparent safety and increased frequency. One of the earliest traders repeatedly involved in the area was a certain Joseph Blanpain (also spelled Blanpin). He was the one chosen to investigate the loss of La Superbe and to search for survivors.

Blanpain had resided in the Louisiana colony before his trading among the Attakapas became a matter of record. In 1734 he already owned real estate in New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> His name appears frequently in the records after December 11, 1738 when he entered into a partnership with Joseph Le Kintreck, called Dupont. Le Kintreck (occasionally spelled Le Quintreck) was custodian of the prisons of New Orleans. He and Blanpain were to trade among the Attakapas and Opelousas in pelts, horses, and other merchandise. Le Kintreck agreed to furnish Blanpain with two Negroes, Michel (appraised at two thousand livres) and Janvier (appraised at fifteen hundred livres).

<sup>1</sup> "Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, VI (Oct. 1924), 695, 703.

Blanpain, on his side, would furnish one Negro appraised at two thousand livres. The expenses of the Negroes were to be shared by the partners, as were those of four orphans who also were to help in the trading venture and receive compensation for their services. The partners were to keep exact records for the five years their association would last. Should one break the partnership he would bear cost and indemnity. Each was accountable to his partner or his partner's heirs.<sup>2</sup>

On the same day, a certain Alexandre Porter entered into a contract with Le Kintreck and Blanpain by which he agreed to travel with Blanpain to help with the trade.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately this is the first and last reference to Alexandre Porter. Whether he actually set off with Blanpain is not known.

The Le Kintreck-Blanpain trading partnership was ambitious, involving as it did at least two traders, three Negroes, and four orphans. To make it even more apparent that, despite Bienville's disparaging comments on the poverty of the Attakapas region, traders thought the territory worth exploiting, another partner soon became involved. Gerard Pery, a promoter and operator who appears in the colonial records whenever there is money to be made by wheeling and dealing, signed a partnership agreement with Le Kintreck and Blanpain on December 14, 1738. He would sell his French imports exclusively to them and in exchange receive all the furs which the partners acquired by trade. The contract bound Pery for one year, Le Kintreck and Blanpain for five.<sup>4</sup> By another contract signed the same day, Le Kintreck and Blanpain agreed to sell Pery whatever tallow or bear grease they might obtain, the tallow at eight cents a pound, and the bear grease at thirty cents a jar.<sup>5</sup> Bear grease, or bear oil, was used in the colony as a substitute for olive oil and was "claimed by some to be quite as good for salads as the best grade of the latter."<sup>6</sup>

Trouble soon developed between Pery and the original partners. On March 15, 1739, Gerard Pery found it necessary to declare officially that he had signed the contract with Blanpain and Le Kintreck in good faith. Pery protested that, if Le Kintreck and Blanpain found the terms unfair because they were bound for five years while he was bound for only one, then he would bind himself for five. Since Le Kintreck received the declaration on behalf of his partner Blanpain, one can assume that Blanpain was by then out of New Orleans and at least on his way toward the Attakapas territory.<sup>7</sup> April of the same year Blanpain was at least

2 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., X (Jan. 1927), 127.

3 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., VI (Jan. 1923), 283.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Nancy Maria Surr, The Commerce of Louisiana During the French Regime, 1699-1763 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), p. 262.

7 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., VI (Apr. 1923), 309.

temporarily "aux Houmas" where he drew up a power of attorney authorizing Joseph Le Kintreck to act for him in dealing with Gerard Pery.<sup>8</sup>

The operation must have gone well. On January 30, 1740, Blanpain signed a contract with a man and his wife, securing their services in his fur trading. Iherosme Dupont and his wife, Marie Elisabeth, agreed to serve him in the village of the Attakapas and elsewhere for six years in exchange for two hundred livres for both.<sup>9</sup> Also on March 18 of the same year, Le Kintreck, acting for himself and his partner Blanpain, signed a contract with Francois Gautreau, royal storekeeper at New Orleans. They would furnish Gautreau all the raw deerskins from a certain Indian district. Gautreau would export the skins to France and they would have a share in the profit. The name of the district is slurred, but it could have been the Attakapas district.<sup>10</sup> This new contract would appear to conflict with the 1739 contract the partners had signed with Gerard Pery unless deerskins were not considered furs.

A light-hearted approach to contracts may explain why a month later Blanpain and Le Kintreck found it necessary to strengthen their partnership. A one page contract signed "at the Opelousas" ("aux Houpelousas") on April 21, 1740, stipulated that if either withdrew from the original compact, a substitute partner would not be allowed. Moreover, should either of them obtain monopoly privileges, that monopoly would be vested in the partnership and not transferrable.<sup>11</sup> Since the contract was drawn up aux Houpelousas, it seems likely that Blanpain had been on the road, trading, while Le Kintreck had conducted business in New Orleans, and that they met at a place mutually convenient.

Blanpain, nevertheless, must have entered into some agreement which displeased his partner since on September 19, 1740, the Superior Council handed down a decision: their contract of partnership was to stand until January 1744 (thus extending the original contract which had been made for five years on December 11, 1738) and any deals Blanpain may have made with other partners were declared void.<sup>12</sup>

Not much further is heard about Blanpain till January 1743 when the Superior Council rendered a decision ordering him to pay Sieur Picmont, plaintiff, 503 deerskins as per note.<sup>13</sup> This was only the first in a series of decisions made by the Superior Council against Blanpain who seems to have been constantly harassed by creditors. The partnership may have fared well, but Blanpain does not seem to have prospered personally. The record for the next few years tells a monotonous story of his being sued, condemned by default, cited again, condemned again, and seldom paying his bills. His appearance in New Orleans seems to have

8 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., VI (July 1923), 198.

9 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., X (Apr. 1927), 258.

10 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., X (Apr. 1927), 271, 258.

11 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., X (Apr. 1927), 277.

12 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., X (July 1927), 428.

13 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XI (July 1928), 471-72.

evoked a stream of citations delivered by Sheriff Lenormand as hungry creditors welcomed the trader home.

On February 1, 1744, the Superior Council rendered judgment against Blanpain, ordering him to deposit eighty-five quarts of grain overdue in payment for an Indian slave purchased from Sieur Trudeau. A copy of the judgment was left at his residence on Royal Street with his Negro Pierrot.<sup>14</sup> On the same day another judgment was handed down against him: he was ordered, under pain of bodily arrest, to pay the sum due Sieur Raguet.<sup>15</sup>

Blanpain probably was not in New Orleans at the time. At least he claimed not to have received a copy of the Trudeau judgment till April. On April 6, Blanpain wrote from Houmas to announce he was sending a pirogue loaded with corn to pay for the Indian slave he had bought from Sieur Trudeau through Sieur Bellerive (Bellevue?). He offered, as an alternative, to settle his debt in cash, when he received it from a Negro named Baptiste who owed him six or seven hundred livres. This latter offer was apparently ignored since a receipt signed by Trudeau acknowledged receiving money from the Registry obtained from the sale of the eighty-five quarts of corn.<sup>16</sup>

Slaves figure prominently in Blanpain's early trading. On December 14, 1743, he exchanged a Negro slave called Monmourou for a Negree woman by the more mundane name of Jeanneton. This exchange took place on the German Coast.<sup>17</sup> Again on January 21, 1745, Joseph Blanpain, described as a settler at Cannes Brusles sold two Negroes to Jean Perret, also of Cannes Brusles, for 3,400 livres.<sup>18</sup> On June 11, 1746, he exchanged a Negro called Bourbon for a Negro woman called Manon and her child.<sup>19</sup>

Blanpain's partnership with Le Kintreck expired on January 1, 1744. Apparently he wasted no time entering into another partnership for trade in the Attakapas and Opelousas territories, but quickly regretted the new arrangement. On March 19, 1744, the partnership between Sieur Fabry de la Bruyere, Secretary of the Marine, and Blanpain was rescinded. Blanpain ceded Fabry his rights to the trade, the exclusive privileges granted in his name, and the debts the Indians owed him as well as the utensils the partners held in common. In exchange Fabry assumed all the debts of the association and moreover gave Blanpain a Negro named Kola and eight hundred deerskins. The act was signed on the German Coast.<sup>20</sup> The debts of the

14 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XII (Oct. 1929), 657.

15 Ibid., 658.

16 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIII (Jan. 1930), 126.

17 Elizabeth Beck Glanelloni, comp., Calendar of Louisiana Colonial Documents, Vol. III, St. Charles Parish, Part I, The D'Arensborg Records, 1734-1769 (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State Archives and Records Commission, n.d.), p. 4.

18 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIII (July 1930), 500.

19 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XVI (Jan. 1933), 140.

20 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIII (Jan. 1930), 121.

partnership were obviously a problem since on March 22, 1745, Remy Paquet petitioned the Superior Council to recover what Fabry and Blanpain owed him in salaries.<sup>21</sup>

This particular partnership seems to have been difficult to end. On June 16, 1745, more than a year after the original rescission, Fabry and Blanpain again annulled their partnership. Either they had entered into a new one, or Fabry found the debts much larger than expected and either he or creditors forced a renegotiation. This time Blanpain gave Fabry one hundred deerskins and his Negro. Again Fabry assumed all debts securing them by mortgaging his belongings, movable and immovable. Blanpain promised not to trade with either Frenchmen or Indians in the Attakapas territory.<sup>22</sup>

On the same day Fabry freed Blanpain of all indebtedness to Sieur La Brosse by promising to pay within the year 3307 pounds of deerskins.<sup>23</sup> The obligation was paid over a year later, Fabry delivering the deerskin on July 16, 1746.<sup>24</sup> It seems that Fabry was either a better or a luckier trader than Blanpain, and that his faith in the worth of the Attakapas trade had been rewarded.

Blanpain was probably less a trader and businessman than an adventurer. For while he was dissolving his partnership with Fabry and extricating himself from debt he was not totally giving up the Attakapas territory. By 1745 he must have earned quite a reputation as an expert on the area since Hervier, the second in command of the ill-fated La Superbe, engaged him to search for the lost captain and crew. On June 19, 1745, Blanpain appeared before a public notary and declared that he was about to leave on a voyage of discovery through Bayou Plaquemine and the Chetimachas Lakes to the Bay of St. Bernard in search of Chevalier Grenier. He named as his universal legatee his friend Joseph Le Kintreck who was to pay all his debts and give one third of the succession to Françoise Valleran, an orphan being brought up in Blanpain's house.<sup>25</sup>

Blanpain was back in New Orleans by the 9th of September, having found no one. On that date he entered into another agreement with Hervier to continue the search for Grenier.<sup>26</sup> On the 10th Le Kintreck and Blanpain made a joint agreement to deliver to Pictet six hundred parchment skins in exchange for two hundred pounds of blue beads.<sup>27</sup> The "voyage of discovery" would also be a voyage of trade.

Blanpain must have left shortly afterwards. On the 23rd he was already in Pointe Coupee where he wrote a letter in which he reported on

21 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIV (Jan. 1931), 98.

22 Ibid., 243-44.

23 Ibid., 254.

24 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XVI (Apr. 1933), 335.

25 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XV (Oct. 1932), 670-71.

26 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIV (Oct. 1931), 573.

27 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XV (Oct. 1932), 672.

miscellaneous business activities and forwarded messages from various people.<sup>28</sup> Blanpain had left too quickly since Grenier reached New Orleans on September 26, two weeks at most after Blanpain's departure.<sup>29</sup>

Business relations between Le Kintreck and Blanpain seem to have come to an end in 1745. Later transactions involve Blanpain alone. He had been involved in some fur trading of his own as early as 1742. On October 31, 1742, J. Banco Piemont had sued him for 503 deerskin in parchment form plus 20% as penalty for failing to deliver the goods on time. As usual in January 1743 the Superior Council condemned Blanpain by default.

Undeterred by this earlier failure Blanpain entered into another transaction with the same Piemont on August 9, 1743. This venture was no more successful than the first one. On September 3, 1746 the Superior Council ordered him to pay Banco Piemont 2349 livres 5 sols and 1175 deerskins. As could be expected the litigation dragged on with petitions, citations, judgments in default, and new citations.<sup>30</sup> It is to be assumed, since the litigation stopped, that Blanpain finally met his obligations. At the same time the Layssard Brothers were suing him for debt. Their bill must eventually have been paid since on December 24, 1747, Layssard Brothers sold him 365 livres worth of brandy. This time he paid the bill promptly on January 1, 1748.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout 1748 Blanpain was involved in lengthy litigation with Nicolas Judice over the rent of three Negro men and one Negro woman who were part of Judice's brother's estate.<sup>32</sup> In March his friend Le Kintreck furnished bond for him.<sup>33</sup> The old trader seems to have found swamps, forests, and savages less dangerous than the eighteenth century business world. Whatever could go wrong, did, as Blanpain's litigations with Sieur Chapron demonstrate. Chapron paid Blanpain two hundred and fifty livres for an ass, expecting the said ass to have no defects. He bought also six mares to mate with the ass but the ass did not "notice them." Chapron wanted either his money back or a "more vigorous" ass. As usual Blanpain was condemned by default and cited again.<sup>34</sup>

Though the records of the Superior Council show no traces of these activities, Blanpain continued trading among the Indians. He ventured farther and farther into Indian territory until he finally ran afoul of

28 Ibid., 671.

29 See "Reluctant Visitors from La Superbe," Attakapas Gazette, III (Sept. 1968), 22-24

30 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XI (Apr. 1928), 308; (July 1928), 471-72; XVII (Jan. 1934), 185; XVIII (July, 1935), 707, 710, 711, 719.

31 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XVII (Jan. 1934), 185; XVIII (July 1935), 709; XVII (Jan. 1934), 202.

32 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIX (Jan. 1936), 233, 235; (Apr. 1936), 467, 490, 501, 508; (July 1936), 761.

33 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIX (Apr. 1936), 501.

34 "R.S.C.L.," L.H.Q., XIX (July, 1936), 777; (Oct. 1936), 1109, 1110, 1111.

Spanish authorities and was captured in November 1754 near Moss Bluff on Trinity River. Blanpain, whom Stanley Faye describes as an "elderly interpreter," had with him two engages, Elias George and Antoine Delfoss, as well as two Negroes. They had built a cabin on what was later called Punta de Gusto near Galveston Bay. Spanish officials were displeased to learn that Blanpain was expecting fifty New Orleans families to settle there and trade with the Indians. The viceroy, legitimately enough, concluded that this settlement was not a private venture and that Blanpain was a government agent sent to infiltrate Spanish-held territory.<sup>35</sup> Kerlerec, then Governor of Louisiana, disclaimed any knowledge of Blanpain's attempted settlement and refused to negotiate for his release. In 1760 orders came to send Blanpain and his companions to Spain for further examination.<sup>36</sup> The old Indian trader, however, did not cross the Atlantic; he had died in a Mexican jail the year before.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Stanley Faye, "Arkansas Outpost of Louisiana: French Dominations," L.H.Q., XXVI (July, 1943), 703-704.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 707.

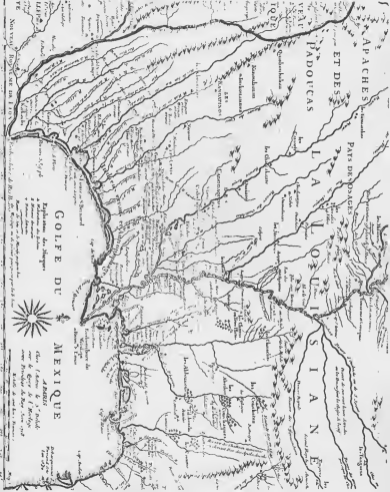
<sup>37</sup> Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas, trans. with notes, Charles Wilson Hackett (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1934), 11, 204.

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Biographical notes on Mathé Allain, Vincent H. Cassidy, Vita and John Reaux appeared in Vol. III, No. 2.



APACHES  
ET DES  
PADOUCAS

PAYS DES OSAGES

LA LOUISIANE

GOLFE DU  
MEXIQUE



Expédition des Allemands  
à l'embouchure du fleuve  
à l'embouchure du fleuve  
à l'embouchure du fleuve

ARRIVÉE

des Allemands à l'embouchure  
du fleuve à l'embouchure du fleuve  
à l'embouchure du fleuve

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